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VIRTUES OF THE HOUSEHOLD

THE Church today is faced with its perennial problem of clerical and religious vocations in a more than usually acute stage. The problem itself, with its consequent problems of fostering and promoting vocations, has theological roots, the study of which goes far towards concentrating effort on the heart of the problem; and, indeed, goes to the depths of much of modern disorder within the family, the nation, and society. It is the purpose of this study to expose those theological roots to plain view.

Such an aim must not be interpreted as in any way a reflection on the highly intelligent attention the problem of ecclesiastical vocations has been receiving in this country. Under the auspices of The Missionary Union of The Clergy, conferences have been held in different parts of the country year by year, and studies have been made from almost every angle of the question of vocations.[1] The acute needs of the Church for

[1] Confer *Vocation Conferences* of September, 1944, for the conference held in New York City; September, 1945, for the conference held in New Orleans; and the forthcoming issue for the conference held in January, 1946, in Washington, D. C.

vocations have been brought out in these conferences with no mincing of words; needs confirmed by fact and authority. There has been complete honesty in the facing of the shortage of vocations, and the possible causes of this shortage.

Most of the effort in these conferences has, naturally, been concentrated on the promotion and fostering of vocations. The encouragement of vocations is not a matter of selling individuals on a career of service, at great benefit to the individual himself; nor has this mistake been made. It has been clearly seen, and explicitly stated, that a vocation to the religious state or to the priesthood is a supernatural gift; only God, then, can be its author.

At the same time, there has been the entirely just conviction of a human part to be played in the development or decay of what God has given. It is along the line of this human part in vocations that most of the studies of the *Vocation Conferences* have proceeded. It has been seen that our human efforts must revolve mostly around the removal of impediments to the fulfillment of vocations, encouraging the necessary dispositions to their development, and nourishing their growth. A vocation to the priesthood or religious life is nothing less than an invitation to serve in the divine household. "Religion is a virtue whereby a man offers something to the service and worship of God. . . . Wherefore those are called religious who give themselves up entirely to the divine service. . . ." [2]

Taking into consideration the essential nature of vocation and the human efforts possible in its favor, we find a real point of comparison with the war-time problem of morale. The comparison, far from being tenuous, has real roots as we shall see in the course of this study. The attempts to build up morale, or to sustain it at a high level, were efforts to increase the willingness of men to serve their country and even to make great sacrifices in that service. On the basis of this much of a

[2] "Religio, autem, . . . est quaedam virtus, per quam aliquis ad Dei servitium et cultum aliquid exhibet. Et ideo antonomastice religiosi dicuntur illi qui se totaliter mancipant divino servitio. . . ." *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 86, a. 1 corp.

comparison, it would seem that vocation, on its human side, could be seen as the fruit of high religious morale, as the superb efforts of men in the crises of combat were seen as the fruit of high patriotic morale.

It is true that throughout the war, morale remained a throughly mysterious factor; certainly there was little official effort to give it a sharp definition. The efforts to foster it were worthy of the vagueness of their goal. Among the means emphasized, a large place was given to activities calculated to distract men — movies, theatrical skits, radio programs, officers' clubs, and enlisted men's beer gardens. Clothes, food, and living conditions were given much more attention than in any past war. There was a strenuous and highly important effort to keep the mail coming in. To a much lesser degree, there was some educational effort toward the realization of the purposes of the war, the training, the methods adopted. All of these things undoubtedly played their part. Yet the results consistently confounded the efforts of the morale builders. For high morale was found among men who were in no position to be distracted; who had little food, insufficient clothes, and miserable living conditions; and who were far beyond the reach of the most zealous postman. On the contrary, the depths of morale were often plumbed among the very men who were within the fullest reach of the combined efforts of all the morale builders.

There has been no such bumbling in the promotion and fostering of vocations. Education in the meaning of religious and priestly life is persistently stressed. Greater efforts are being made to furnish adequate information and material for first-hand appreciation of this or that community. With the fundamental motivation of charity, loyalty, piety, self-sacrifice and zeal have been stressed. Nevertheless, there has been some vagueness, a confusion of incidental or dispositive elements with essential and direct causes, that is unnecessary and not at all helpful.

It seems possible to focus the efforts to foster and promote

vocations still more sharply by unearthing the theological roots of the human dispositions of vocations. A clear delineation of the fundamental and essential elements should do away with any least scattering of our thought and action in favor of vocations. Actually, an investigation of the theological roots of religious and priestly vocation not only contributes to the work of fostering vocations but also lays the foundations for highly important conclusions in several different fields of human action. It will, for example, explain much that has been mysterious about patriotic morale, give some penetrating insights into family spirit and discipline, and give opportunities for highly interesting speculations on social relationships. Nor is the reason for this wide field of application obscure; in fact it might be made completely clear, and be effectively summarized, by saying that the theological roots of religious and priestly vocation make clear the reason, beauty, and attractiveness of all service to others.

The obvious note common to vocation and patriotic morale is that of service. Nor is this just any kind of service. It is service in the very humble sense of work to be done by a handmaid, a servant. It is significant that the statement of this condition is made by theologians through the Latin word *famulatus*, a homely or terrible word according as it means the state of being a servant or of being a slave.

At any rate, there are some plain implications in this common note of service. There is, first of all, an essentially implied subjection, a fulfilling of assigned tasks and obedience to orders. This subjection itself is a kind of reverence and honor, even when it is no more than an external subjection with external reverence and honor; there is in it a recognition of superiority, in fact, a superiority that has about it an air of clarity and inviolability difficult to dispute. Vaguely, it is the kind of superiority recognized in something that is old enough to reach far back into the past; more sharply, it is the superiority attached to a thing that reaches back to and beyond our beginnings and embraces them.

This type of superiority is readily seen by a man, who recognizes without difficulty that he did not start himself. As a consequence, there is established an intimate kind of order in a man's life by this service demanded in the name of religious vocation and patriotic morale: it gives him a clear sight of what is above him. If once a man sees clearly what is above him, all that is above him, he knows beyond cavil what belongs beneath him; and by that fact he knows his own place with complete certitude.

The importance of a knowledge of his place is of incalculable value to a man. Without it, he cannot recognize usurpers of his life and his rights, let alone beat them off; nor can he protect himself from making a wreck of his life and a fool of himself through the assumption of roles for which he was never fitted. In proportion to the importance of the hierarchy this state of service reveals in a man's life, there are extreme demands made by it upon a man: results like combat service in wartime or the holocaust of one's life in religion approach the utmost that can be asked of men; the reverence and honor implied in subjection do not come easily to the pride of man; and order is never maintained without effort. If we are to find the roots of vocation and patriotic morale, we must look to the immediate sources of all good acts, that is, to the virtues; for this is clearly a matter of solidly good action, and every good act is an act of virtue.[3]

Specifically, then, it will be necessary to trace service to others to the particular virtue from which it proceeds. If that virtue is well understood, its proper acts clearly seen and thoroughly analyzed, the ultimate reasons for the reverence, honor, and consequent subjection demanded in the name of service will be uncovered. Our procedure in this paper will be as follows: 1) a determination of and an analysis of the *virtues* of service, namely, religion, piety, patriotism, and observance

[3] . . . virtus et quae bonum facit habentem, et opus ejus bonum reddit; et ideo necesse est dicere omnem actum bonum ad virtutem pertinere. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 2 corp.

in that order; 2) a thorough study of the *primary acts* of each of these virtues in order, namely, the first act of religion, the first act of piety, and so on. In the study of the virtues, much attention will be paid to the virtue of Religion for it is here that St. Thomas has his most explicit treatment of the principles involved in the service of others; much that will be said of the other virtues is implicit in Thomas' treatment of the virtue of Religion, and thus dependent on a thorough understanding of that virtue. The same will be true of the study of the acts of the virtues. The act of devotion, which is the primary act of the virtue of Religion, will be dealt with at considerable length; most of the conclusions relative to the primary acts of the other virtues of service are implicit in St. Thomas' treatment of the act of devotion. We begin our investigation with the virtue of Religion because we have already seen that the very notion of service to God, the essential notion of religious vocation, places it squarely under the virtue of Religion.[4]

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Virtue of Service to God—Religion

As St. Thomas analyzes the virtue of religion, he sees it as primarily a matter of honesty. Its chief concern is with the payment of an unpayable debt, or, at the very least, a recognition of this debt. It has about it the flavor of justice in that it has to do with our relations with another, namely God. It measures up to the notion of justice inasmuch as it deals with debts; but it falls far short of the equality of payment that strict justice demands. It is, then, a virtue annexed to justice, but distinct from it; a potential part of justice, falling short of full payment but doggedly proceeding as best it may to the straightforward dealing with debt that is the essential mark of an honest man. St. Thomas has put this succinctly:

Two points must be observed about the virtues annexed to a principal virtue. The first is that these virtues have something in

[4] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 86, a. 1 corp. Cf. footnote 2 *supra*.

common with the principal virtue; and the second is that in some respect they fall short of the perfection of that virtue. Accordingly since justice is of one man to another, . . . all the virtues that are directed to another person may by reason of this common aspect be annexed to justice. Now the essential character of justice consists in rendering to another his due according to equality. . . . Wherefore in two ways may a virtue directed to another person fall short of the perfection of justice: first, by falling short of the aspect of equality; secondly, by falling short of the aspect of due. For certain virtues there are which render another his due, but are unable to render the equal due. In the first place, whatever man renders to God is due, yet it cannot be equal, as though man rendered to God as much as he owes Him. . . . In this respect *religion* is annexed to justice since, according to Tully, it consists in offering service and ceremonial rites or worship to *some superior nature that men call divine*.[5]

The debt, which is the sole concern of the virtue of religion, is not to be described by a vague wave of the hand at the wonders of the universe, the complexity of the life of man, or the simplicity of a child. It can be laid on the line in so many words, a challenge to the honesty of man, with no blurring of the outlines of the debtor's obligations. The virtue of religion is concerned with the debt man owes God under the precise formality of First Principle; God is the source, the start, the beginning of man's beginnings, the absolute first principle of man's being and of his guidance or direction to happiness.

[5] . . . in virtutibus quae adjunguntur alicui principali virtuti, duo sunt consideranda: primo quidem, quod virtutes illae in aliquo cum principali virtute conveniant; secundo, quod in aliquo deficiant a perfecta ratione ipsius. Quia vero justitia ad alterum est, . . . omnes virtutes quae ad alterum, possunt ratione convenientiae justitiae annecti. Ratio vero justitiae consistit in hoc quod alteri reddatur quod ei debetur secundum aequalitatem. . . .

Dupliciter ergo aliqua virtus ad alterum existens a ratione justitiae deficit: uno quidem modo, in quantum deficit a ratione aequalis; alio modo, in quantum deficit a ratione debiti. Sunt enim quaedam virtutes quae debitum quidem alteri reddunt, sed non possunt reddere aequale. Et primo quidem quidquid ab homine Deo redditur, debitum est, non tamen potest esse aequale, ut scilicet tantum homo ei reddat, quantum debet. . . . Et secundum hoc adjungitur justitiae religio, quae, ut dicit Tullius, . . . superioris cujusdam naturae, quam divinam vocant, curam caeremoniamque affert. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 80, a. unic.

". . . it belongs to religion to show reverence to one God under one aspect, namely as the first principle of the creation and government of things." [6] ". . . religion denotes properly a relation to God. For it is He to Whom we ought to be bound as to our unfailing principle; to Whom also our choice should be resolutely directed as to our last end; and Whom we lose when we neglect Him by sin, and should recover by believing in Him and confessing our faith." [7]

It is particularly important here to read the words of St. Thomas most carefully, for it is essential to understand exactly the precise nature of the debt with which religion has to deal. Throughout its whole field, religion looks to the *first principle* of men; that is the "*one aspect*" under which it pays reverence to God. Even when referring to the last end of man, religion does so, not under the formality of an infinite good to be possessed, but under the formality of a first principle of guidance and government. It is a moral virtue which is properly about means to the end, not the end itself.[8] Unless this rigid limitation of the object of religion is kept clearly in mind, it will be extremely difficult to distinguish its activities from those of charity, to speak accurately about its acts, and to establish clearly the proper supremacy of religion.

From the fact that God is man's first principle of being and of government, we have a double statement of the divine excellence. God is not infinitely good because He is the last end, and so the first principle of direction or government; rather, it is because of His infinite goodness that He is the last end.

[6] Ad religionem autem pertinet exhibere reverentiam uni Deo secundum unam rationem, in quantum scilicet est primum principium creationis et gubernationis rerum. Unde ipse dicit Malach. 1, 6: *Si ego Pater, ubi honor meus?* Patris enim est producere et gubernare. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 3.

[7] . . . religio proprie importat ordinem ad Deum. Ipse enim est cui principaliter alligari debemus tamquam indeficienti principio: ad quem etiam nostra electio assidue dirigi debet sicut in ultimum finem; quem etiam negligentes peccando amittimus, et credendo, et fidem protestando recuperare debemus. *Ibid.*, a. 1. Confer *ibid.*, a. 1, ad 3um et 4um.

[8] . . . est virtus moralis, cujus est esse circa ea quae sunt ad finem. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 5 corp.

On the other hand, as first principle of being, God has all the infinite excellence undeniable to the first cause. The recognition of this divine excellence is the fundamental payment by religion of man's debt to God.

The good to which religion is directed, is to give due honor to God. Again, honor is due to someone under the aspect of excellence: and to God a singular excellence is competent, since He infinitely surpasses all things and exceeds them in every way.[9]

By one and the same act man both serves and worships God, for worship regards the excellence of God, to Whom reverence is due: while service regards the subjection of man, who, by his condition, is under an obligation of showing reverence to God. To these two belong all the acts ascribed to religion, because, by them all, man bears witness to the Divine excellence and to his own subjection to God. . . .[10]

This, then, is the double note of the religious debt man owes to God: reverence for the divine excellence and subjection to the divine principality. Actually, the two are different sides of one and the same act of worship; and this act, in its essential nature, is no more than an honest recognition of the first principle of man's being and government. By recognizing that divine principality, man is at the same time protesting the divine excellence which brought him into being and directs him to happiness, and his own orderly position beneath that supremely excellent Being.

The debt is paid by the acts of religion. Its payment is a matter of honesty, a matter of order, and a matter of great privilege. By it, the very foundation of all order is established in a man's moral life; he recognizes that his place in the world

[9] Bonum autem ad quod ordinatur religio, est exhibere Deo debitum honorem. Honor autem debetur alicui ratione excellentiae. Deo autem competit singularis excellentia, in quantum omnia in infinitum transcendit secundum omnimodum excessum. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 4 corp.

[10] . . . eodem actu homo servit Deo et colit ipsum; nam cultus respicit Dei excellentiam, cui reverentia debetur; servitus autem respicit subjectionem hominis, qui ex sua conditione obligatur ad exhibendam reverentiam Deo. Et ad haec duo pertinent omnes actus qui religioni attribuuntur, quia per omnes homo protestatur divinam excellentiam et subjectionem sui ad Deum. . . . *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 3 ad 2um.

is beneath God, while at the same time he has an insight into his own dignity from the knowledge he has of his sources. Obviously, man's subjection to God is not a humiliation of himself, since it is one and the same act of recognition of the truth of divine excellence.

We pay God honor and reverence, not for His sake (because He is of Himself full of glory to which no creature can add anything), but for our own sake, because by the very fact that we revere and honor God, our mind is subjected to Him; wherein its perfection consists, since a thing is perfected by being subjected to its superior; for instance, the body is perfected by being quickened by the soul . . .[11]

This is man's place, this is where he belongs; and a man is not humiliated, debased, or impeded in his progress to perfection by being in his proper place any more than the human eye is humiliated, debased, or impeded by being in its proper place in a human head.

This is a paltry payment for so great a debt. Indeed, the magnitude of the debt is itself a complete guarantee that our payment will be inadequate.

Religion is . . . a moral virtue . . . and observes a mean . . . in actions directed to God, by establishing a kind of equality in them. And when I say *equality*, I do not mean absolute equality, because it is not possible to pay God as much as we owe Him, but equality in consideration of man's ability and God's acceptance.[12]

On this score, then, we need not be afraid of going too far; since the debt exceeds our greatest efforts to liquidate it, there can be no question of our ever paying too much.

[11] . . . Deo reverentiam et honorem exhibemus, non propter seipsum, quia ex seipso est gloria plenus, cui nihil a creatura adjici potest, sed propter nos, quia videlicet per hoc quod Deum reveremur, et honoramus, mens nostra ei subjicitur; et in hoc ejus perfectio consistit; quaelibet enim res perficitur per hoc quod subditur suo superiori, sicut corpus per hoc quod vivicatur ab anima, . . . *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 7 corp.

[12] . . . religio est virtus . . . moralis . . . et medium in ipsa accipiatur . . . secundum quamdam aequalitatem inter operationes quae sunt ad Deum. Dico autem *aequalitatem* non absolute, quia Deo non potest tantum exhiberi, quantum ei debetur, sed secundum quamdam considerationem humanae facultatis, et divinae acceptionis. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 5, ad 3um.

And it is possible to have too much in matters pertaining to the Divine Worship, not as regards the circumstance of quantity, but as regards other circumstances, as when Divine worship is paid to whom it is not due, or when it is not due, or unduly in respect of some other circumstance.[13]

There can be no such thing as too much religion, though it is possible to have serious neglect of things that must not be neglected under the invalid excuse of religious exercises.

On the other hand, we are not to be blamed or discouraged at the miserly amount we can pay on our debt to our first principle.

Virtue is praised because of the will, not because of the ability: and therefore if a man fall short of equality which is the mean of justice, through lack of ability, his virtue deserves no less praise, provided there be no failing on the part of his will.[14]

A man who throws his life on the counter in payment of his debt of religion is hardly making a princely gesture if we consider the infinite perfection and riches of God. What will this add to the life of God?

In offering a thing to a man on account of its usefulness to him, the more needy the man the more praiseworthy the offering, because it is more useful: whereas we offer a thing to God not on account of its usefulness to Him, but for the sake of His glory, and on account of its usefulness to us.[15]

On both counts, then, this is the supreme religious gesture: for by it a man has given all that he has to give, and he has by that fact touched the peak of moral perfection, if only for the moment of his victorious surrender.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] . . . laus virtutis in voluntate consistit, non autem in potestate; et ideo deficere ab aequalitate, quae est medium justitiae, propter defectum potestatis, non diminuit laudem virtutis, si non fuerit defectus ex parte voluntatis. *Summa Theol.*, q. 81, a. 6, ad 1um.

[15] . . . in his quae exhibentur aliis propter eorum utilitatem, est exhibitio laudabilior quae fit magis indigenti, quia est utilior. Deo autem non exhibetur aliquid propter ejus utilitatem, sed propter ejus gloriam, nostram autem utilitatem. *Ibid.*, ad 2um. Confer *supra*, footnote 11.

The virtue of religion is a household virtue. It puts man in his proper place as a servant in the divine household, busying him in that humble service that is yet his greatest perfection and at the same time his full tribute of reverence and honor to the divine excellence. Religion is busy about the household tasks. "God is related to religion not as matter or object, but as end: and consequently religion is not a theological virtue whose object is the last end, but a moral virtue which is properly about things *referred to* the end."[16] Faith, hope, and charity, looking directly to God as to their object, are the superiors of the virtue of religion; religion bows to them and moves at their command. But this is the only obeisance religion need make in the company of virtues.

In the busy moral life of man, the life consumed in handling the means to the end of man, religion stands supreme.

> Whatever is directed to an end takes its goodness from being ordered to that end; so that the nearer it is to the end, the better it is. Now moral virtues . . . are about matters that are ordered to God as to their end. And religion approaches nearer to God than the other moral virtues, in so far as its actions are directly and immediately ordered to the honor of God. Hence religion excels among the moral virtues.[17]

This, then, comes first: before justice and all its other allied virtues, before temperance and its allied virtues, before fortitude and its allies, before prudence itself; for this is the fundamental virtue for the orderly conduct of man's moral life.

It is important to notice that for a man thus to apply himself and his acts to God by religion, two conditions are essential.

[16] . . . Deus non comparatus ad virtutem religionis sicut materia vel objectum, sed sicut finis. Et ideo religio non est virtus theologica, cujus objectum est ultimus finis; sed est virtus moralis, cujus est esse circa ea quae sunt ad finem. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 5 corp. Confer *ibid.*, ad 1um.

[17] . . . ea quae sunt ad finem, sortiuntur bonitatem ex ordine in finem; et ideo quanto sunt fini propinquiora, tanto sunt meliora. Virtutes autem morales, . . . sunt circa ea quae ordinantur in Deum sicut in finem. Religio autem magis de propinquo accedit ad Deum quam aliae virtutes morales, in quantum operatur ea quae directe et immediate ordinantur in honorem divinum. Et ideo religio praeminet inter alias virtutes morales. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 6 corp.

For cleanness is necessary in order that the mind be applied to God, since the human mind is soiled by contact with inferior things, even as all things depreciate by admixture with baser things, for instance, silver by being mixed with lead. Now in order for the mind to be united to the Supreme Being it must be withdrawn from inferior things; and hence it is that without cleanness the mind cannot be applied to God. . . . Again, firmness is required for the mind to be applied to God, for it is applied to Him as its last end and first beginning, and such things must needs be most immovable. . . .[18]

Without this spiritual cleanliness and stability, religion will not play a predominant role in a man's life, which is to say that human life will be fundamentally disordered throughout.

With this cleanliness and stability, however, religion can proceed to its acts: internal acts, which are religion's principal and *per se* acts; and the external acts which are secondary and ordered to the internal acts.

Now the human mind, in order to be united to God, needs to be guided by the sensible world. . . . Wherefore in the Divine worship it is necessary to make use of corporeal things, that man's mind may be aroused thereby, as by signs, to the spiritual acts by means of which he is united to God. Therefore the internal acts of religion take precedence of the others and belong to religion essentially, while its external acts are secondary, and subordinate to the internal acts.[19] These external things are offered to God, not as though He stood in need of them, . . . but as signs of the internal and spiritual works, which are of themselves acceptable to God.

[18] Munditia enim necessaria est ad hoc quod mens Deo applicetur, quia mens humana inquinatur ex hoc quod inferioribus rebus conjungitur; sicut quaelibet res ex immixtione pejoris sordescit, ut argentum ex immixtione plumbi. Oportet autem quod mens ab inferioribus rebus abstrahatur, ad hoc quod supremae rei possit conjungi. Et ideo mens sine munditia Deo applicari non potest. . . . Firmitas etiam exigitur ad hoc quod mens Deo applicetur; applicat enim ei sicut ultimo fini et primo principio; hujusmodi autem oportet maxime immobilia esse. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 8 corp.

[19] Mens autem humana indiget, ad hoc quod conjungatur Deo, sensibilium manuductione, . . . Et ideo in divino cultu necesse est aliquibus corporalibus uti, ut eis quasi signis quibusdam mens hominis excitetur ad spirituales actus, quibus Deo conjungitur. Et ideo religio habet quidem interiores actus quasi principales, et per se ad religionem pertinentes; exteriores vero actus quasi secundarios, et ad interiores actus ordinatos. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 7 corp.

Hence Augustine says: *The visible sacrifice is the sacrament or sacred sign of the invisible sacrifice.*[20]

Man, being what he is, must have external religious acts; but these will always remain secondary and ordered to the internal acts by which he is religiously united to God, i. e., by which he reverences and honors God, subjecting himself.

Looking back, now at the virtue of religion (from which vocation springs) we see it as a virtue working at the payment of the debt due to God as the First Principle of our being and government. It does this by its tribute of reverence and honor for the excellence of God, of subjection for the divine principality; both by the single act of worship, which is no more than the honest recognition of God's superior place.

Religion, then, is a matter of honesty in meeting one's debts; it is a matter of order, of hierarchy in a man's life, in recognizing the superiority of the first principle; and a matter of privilege, for by that very subjection which puts order in a man's life, he is himself perfected.

The debt religion deals with is unpayable of its very nature; obviously, we cannot in our turn be first principle to God. We can never, then, pay too much on that debt; there can be no excess in the matter of religion, there can be only abuses of the circumstances of time, place and so on in the placing of religious acts. On the other hand, there is no room for despair at the paltriness of our best efforts in meeting this debt, for the measure of our efforts is not our power to pay but our willingness to acknowledge the debt and offer what we have.

Religion is a moral virtue, busy with the means by which a man strides to his last end. So, it is beneath the theological virtues which soar directly to that last end. But it is supreme among all the moral virtues because, among them, it approaches most closely to the end of man's whole life. Its external acts

[20] . . . hujusmodi exteriora non exhibentur Deo, quasi his indigeat: . . . Sed exhibentur Deo tamquam signa quaedam interiorum, et spiritualium operum, quae per se Deus acceptat. Unde Augustinus dicit in 10 de Civ. Dei, cap. 5, parum a princ.: *Sacrificium visibile invisibilis sacrificii sacramentum*, id est *sacrum signum est. Ibid.*, ad 2um.

(necessary because man is what he is, a creature of body and soul) exist only for the internal acts by which man actually pays the debt due to God, the debt of worship. For these acts, internal and external, he needs cleanliness and stability. In proportion as he plunges into things beneath him, he becomes increasingly incapable of religious acts; as he fixes his hold on wavering supports, he has less capacity to hold fast to the immovable principles of his being and government.

This summary of the characteristics of the virtue of religion will, as we shall see, take on peculiar significance in dealing with the household virtues that establish order in the domestic, the patriotic, and the social world. For what has been said of religion relative to the whole life of man is proportionately true of these virtues in their own proper sphere. It is time now to look at these virtues and their origin in some detail.

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Objects of Service Other Than God

Under God, man has other principles of his being and government which, by the very fact of sharing in the principality of God, lay solid claim to reverence and subjection from men. The descent from religion through these other virtues will be a gradual one proportioned to the lessening share in the divine principality enjoyed by these other principles.

. . . whatever man renders to God is due, yet it cannot be equal, as though man rendered to God as much as he owes Him. . . . In this respect *religion* is annexed to justice. . . . Secondly, it is not possible to make to one's parents an equal return of what one owes to them . . . ; and thus *piety* is annexed to justice, for thereby, as Tully says (*loc. cit.*), *a man renders service and constant deference to his kindred and the well-wishers of his country.* Thirdly, according to the Philosopher, man is unable to offer an equal meed for virtue, and thus *observance* is annexed to justice, consisting according to Tully (*loc. cit.*) in the deference and honor rendered to those who excel in worth.[21]

[21] . . . quidquid ab homine Deo redditur, debitum est, non tamen potest esse aequale, ut scilicet tantum homo ei reddat, quantum debet. . . . Et secundum hoc

. . . according to the various excellences of those persons to whom something is due, there must needs be a corresponding distinction of virtues in a descending order. Now just as a carnal father partakes of the character of principle in a particular way, which character is found in God in a universal way, so too a person who, in some way, exercises providence in one respect, partakes of the character of father in a particular way, since a father is the principle of generation, of education, of learning and of whatever pertains to the perfection of human life: while a person who is in a position of dignity is as a principle of government with regard to certain things: for instance, the governor of a state in civil matters, the commander of an army in matters of warfare, a professor in matters of learning and so forth. . . . Therefore, just as, in a manner beneath religion, whereby worship is given to God, we find piety, whereby we honor our parents, so under piety we find observance, whereby reverence and honor are paid to persons in positions of dignity.[22]

God is the absolutely first principle of our being and government. This divine principality is shared by our parents, as the first in the line of secondary causes; it is further shared by our country; and, in varying degrees, by individual men. From all of these we, in some sense, spring; by all of them we are guided to happiness, governed. To all of them, then, in lessening degrees, we owe unpayable debts.

adjungitur justitiae *religio*. . . . Secundo, parentibus non potest secundum aequalitatem recompensari quod eis debetur . . . ; et sic adjungitur justitiae *pietas*, per quam, ut Tullius dicit loc. cit. *sanguine junctis patriaequae benevolis officium et diligens tribuitur cultus*. Tertio, non potest secundum aequale praemium recompensari ab homine virtus . . . et sic adjungitur justitiae *observantia*, per quam, ut Tullius dicit, loc. sup. cit., homines aliqua dignitate antecedentes quodam cultu et honore dignantur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 80, a. 1.

[22] . . . necesse est ut eo modo per quemdam ordinatum descensum distinguantur virtutes, sicut excellentia personarum quibus est aliquid reddendum. Sicut autem carnalis pater particulariter participat rationem principii, quae universaliter invenitur in Deo, ita etiam persona quae quantum ad aliquid providentiam circa nos gerit, particulariter participat proprietatem patris, quia pater est principium et generationis, et educationis, et disciplinae, et omnium quae ad perfectionem humanae vitae pertinent; persona autem in dignitate constituta est sicut principium gubernationis respectu aliquarum rerum; sicut princeps civitatis in rebus civilibus, dux autem exercitus in rebus bellicis, magister autem in disciplinis; et simile est in aliis. . . . Et ideo sicut sub religione, per quam cultus tribuitur Deo, quodammodo invenitur pietas, per quam coluntur parentes, ita sub pietate invenitur observantia, per quam cultus et honor exhibetur personis in dignitate constitutis. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 1.

. . . Man becomes a debtor to other men in various ways, according to their various excellence and the various benefits received from them. On both counts God holds first place, for He is supremely excellent, and is for us the first principle of being and government. In the second place, the principles of our being and government are our parents and our country, that have given us birth and nourishment. Consequently man is debtor chiefly to his parents and his country, after God. Wherefore just as it belongs to religion to give worship to God, so does it belong to piety, in the second place, to give honor to one's parents and one's country.[23]

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Virtue of Service in the Home—Piety

The virtue of piety, as it is spoken of by St. Thomas, extends to both parents and country. However, since in ordinary usage we speak of piety towards country as patriotism, throughout the rest of this paper we shall reserve the word "piety" for piety towards parents, calling piety towards country "patriotism." [24]

Piety, then, ranking immediately below religion among these virtues dealing with unpayable debts, has for its work towards parents in the narrower field of domestic life what religion does towards God in the whole field of moral life.[25] What has been said of the virtue of religion can be said, preserving the proper proportion, of the virtue of piety; it has exactly the same task, in a narrower and secondary field, to be performed in proportionately the same way.

[23] . . . homo efficitur diversimode aliis debitor, secundum corum diversam excellentiam et diversa beneficia ab eis suscepta. In utroque autem Deus summum obtinet locum; qui et excellentissimus est, et est nobis essendi et gubernationis principium; secundario vero nostri esse et gubernationis principia sunt parentes et patria, a quibus et in qua nati et nutriti sumus. Et ideo post Deum est homo maxime debitor parentibus et patriae. Unde sicut ad religionem pertinet cultum Deo exhibere, ita secundario gradu ad pietatem pertinet exhibere cultum parentibus et patriae. *Summa Theol., ibid.*, q. 101, a. 1. Cf. *ibid.*, q. 81, a. 4.

[24] The question as to whether the difference between piety and patriotism is merely verbal or real, with its consequent question of one or two virtues expressed by these words, is a matter of discussion among theologians.

[25] Cf. *supra*, footnotes 22 and 23.

. . . the good to which religion is directed is to give due honor to God. Again, honor is due to someone under the aspect of excellence: and to God a singular excellence is competent, since He infinitely surpasses all things and exceeds them in every way. Wherefore to Him is special honor due: even as in human affairs we see that different honor is due to different personal excellences, one kind to a father, another to the king, and so on.[26]

Like religion, then, piety is a matter of honesty, of order, and of privilege. It is a matter of honesty, for it is a matter of paying a debt: the debt we owe our parents as principles of our being and government. More concretely, we owe them reverence and subjection; reverence for their excellence (or superiority to us) as principles, and subjection by reason of that principality. Both of these, reverence and subjection, are actually paid in one and the same act of veneration or honor, just as religion in its one act of worship both reverences God and subjects man to Him. There is a sharp difference here between the subjection of a man to parents as a principle of direction and the subjection involved in the reverence paid to a principle of being.

The prince is compared to the father as a universal to a particular power, as regards external government, but not as regards the father being a principle of generation: for in this way the father should be compared with the divine power from which all things derive their being.[27]

A father is a principle of being immediately under God as first principle; but he is a principle of external government only mediately, under the state which is the immediate participant

[26] . . . Bonum autem ad quod ordinatur religio, est exhibere Deo debitum honorem. Honor autem debetur alicui ratione excellentiae. Deo autem competit singularis excellentia, in quantum omnia in infinitum transcendit secundum omnimodum excessum. Unde ei debetur specialis honor; sicut in rebus humanis videmus quod diversis excellentiis personarum diversus honor debetur, alius quidem patri, alius regi, et sic de aliis. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 4.

[27] Princeps comparatur ad patrem, sicut universalis virtus ad particularem, quantum ad exteriorem gubernationem, non autem quantum ad hoc quod pater est principium generationis; sic enim comparatur ad ipsum virtus divina, quae est omnium productiva in esse. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 3, ad 1um.

of the principality of God as first principle of direction or government. The reason for this is not hard to see. The governing principle of all means (with which these virtues of the unpayable debts alone deal) is the end. Now God is the final end of man, and so the first principle of direction or government; the state is an intermediary end further ordered to the final end of man's happiness, and, as an end, can be a limited principle of direction or government; but parents are in no sense an end of the children. What principality they have in government will be participated from the state, or exercised by way of regency during the immature years of the child.[28] This last is of no small importance; it really means that the dependency of the child under this aspect, and so its obligation to honor, reverence, and give subjection, is quite complete during these years, though it steadily diminishes with maturity. The obligation to honor, reverence, and subjection to parents as principles of being endures unchanged for all time.

In this regard, a full statement of the parents' principality of being reveals the great responsibility this principality lays upon the parents. ". . . a father is the principle of generation, of education, of learning and of whatever pertains to the perfection of human life: . . ." [29]. In the ordinary discipline and training of children, the father is acting as a principle of being, not as a governor; whoever exercises any share of this training and discipline is really sharing in the principality of the father as principle of being.[30]

In this matter of the unpayable debt to parents, it is also true that there can be no such thing as overpaying the debt; there cannot be too much of piety. What abuses creep in here

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] . . . pater est principium et generationis, et educationis, et disciplinae, et omnium quae ad perfectionem humanae vitae pertinent. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 1.

[30] ". . . so too a person who, in some way exercises providence in one respect, partakes of the character of father in a particular way, since a father is the principle of generation, etc." (ita etiam persona quae quantum ad aliquid providentiam circa nos gerit, particulariter participat proprietatem patris, quia pater est principium et generationis, etc.) *Summa Theol., Ibid.*

are due to other circumstances than the circumstance of quantity. The debt is unpayable by its very nature; it cannot be overpaid. The very best we can give in payment will still seem paltry; yet, our payment is not to be judged by our incapacity but by our will to pay the debt.[31]

Piety, like religion, is a matter of order. It does for the domestic sphere what religion does for all of moral life; showing man clearly what is above him, and by that fact making plain his own place in the domestic circle. It establishes, then, the fundamental order in the home. The child is beneath the parent, the son beneath the father, in a subjection of reverence and honor; yet that subjection is not to the child's degradation but to its perfection. For the payment of this debt to parents, like the payment of the religious debt to God, is not for the perfection of the parents or their utility, but primarily for the perfection of the child.[32] Our reverence and honor and subjection add nothing to the principality of the parents; they add much to the perfection of ourselves.[33] True enough, parents have not the infinite perfection of God, and so there is none of the same impossibility of our working for their benefit. But this payment of the debt of piety will, of itself, do no more for the parents than ease a little of the hunger of the human heart for appreciation and gratitude. Accidentally, it may indeed happen that our parents have dire need of our assistance; in that case, in the name of the honor we owe them as principles, we are obliged to come to their assistance. But this is by way of exception and accidentally: in themselves, the parents are, in their capacity of principles, to provide for the child, not the child for the parent.

We owe something to our parents in two ways: that is to say, both essentially and accidentally. We owe them essentially that which is due to a father as such; and since he is his son's superior through being the principle of his being, the latter owes him reverence and service. Accidentally, that is due to a father which it befits him to receive in respect of something accidental to him, for instance, if he

[31] Confer *supra*, footnotes 12 and 14.
[32] Confer *supra*, footnote 11. [33] *Ibid.*

be ill, it is fitting that his children should visit him and see to his cure; if he be poor, it is fitting that they should support him; and so on in like instance, all of which come under the head of service due.[34]

Since a father stands in the relation of principle, and his son in the relation of that which is from a principle, it is essentially fitting for a father to support his son: and consequently he is bound to support him not only for a time, but for all his life, and this is to lay by. On the other hand, for the son to bestow something on his father is accidental, arising from some momentary necessity, wherein he is bound to support him, but not to lay by as for a long time beforehand, because naturally parents are not the successors of their children, but children of their parents.[35]

Just as religion does not look primarily to the goodness of God but to His excellence and principality, so piety does not look primarily to the goodness of parents; goodness is the proper object of love, not of piety. This reverence, honor, and subjection owed to parents is not in itself dependent on love for the parents; it is a debt that flows from their very position as principles of being and direction. Love, of course, will increase piety, and piety will usually lead to love and the increase of love. But this right to the payment made by piety, is not one which the parents surrender by the character of their lives.[36]

[34] . . . parentibus . . . aliquid debetur dupliciter: uno modo *per se*; alio modo *per accidens*. Per se quidem debetur eis id quod decet patrem, in quantum pater est: qui cum sit superior, quasi principium filii existens, debetur ei a filio reverentia et obsequium. Per accidens autem aliquid debetur patri, quod decet eum accipere secundum aliquid quod ei accidit; puta si sit infirmus, quod visitetur et ejus curationi intendatur; si sit pauper, quod sustentetur, et sic de aliis hujusmodi, quae omnia sub debito obsequio continentur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 101, a. 2. Confer *ibid.*, ad 1um.

[35] . . . quia pater habet rationem principii, filius autem habet rationem a principio existentis, ideo per se patri convenit ut subveniat filio; et propter hoc non solum ad horam debet ei subvenire sed ad totam suam vitam, quod est thesaurizare. Sed quod filius aliquid conferat patri, hoc est per accidens ratione alicujus necessitatis instantis, in qua tenetur ei subvenire, non autem thesaurizare quasi in longinquum, quia naturaliter non parentes filiorum, sed filii parentum sunt successores. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 101, a. 2, ad 2um.

[36] "The object of love is the good; the object of honor or reverence, however, is something excellent." (. . . objectum amoris est bonum; objectum autem honoris vel reverentiae est aliquid excellens.) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 4, ad 3um. Confer *ibid.*, q. 82, a. 2, ad 2um.

How far should that respect for parents go? Well, at the very least, it must include not only honor, but all the becoming acts that rule the relations of one man to another. ". . . in veneration, there is to be understood not only honor, but also whatever else pertains to the becoming acts by which one man is ordered to another." [37]

Like religion, piety also demands, as conditions dispositive to its activity, a certain cleanliness and stability. After all, it is looking to what is above; the sordidness that infects the mind from commerce with what is beneath man is no preparation for consideration of superior things. Moreover, the whole activity of piety circles around the principles of man's being and government; and principles, as stable, enduring elements in a man's life, demand a firmness and loyalty from the man who would hold fast to them.[38] As with the acts of religion, where the external ones are ordered to and exist for the internal acts, so in the acts of piety; the honor, reverence, and subjection externally manifested are for the internal by which alone a man takes his proper place in the family, really venerating the parents to whom he is so hopelessly indebted.[39] The debt of piety extends beyond parents to all blood relations, yet never loses that essential aspect of a debt to parents; for the veneration we give blood relations is precisely because of their relationship to common parents.[40]

A house without piety can hardly lay title to the hallowed name of home. It is lacking in fundamental order; it is not so much disordered as in chaos. No one really belongs here, for no one has his place in such an establishment. The child's

[37] . . . in cultu non solum intelligitur honor, sed etiam quaecumque alia quae pertinent ad decentes actus quibus homo ad alium ordinatur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 2, ad 1um.

[38] Confer *supra*, footnote 18.

[39] Confer *supra*, footnote 19.

[40] "The honor due to our parents includes the honor given to all our kindred, since our kinsfolk are those who descend from the same parents." (In cultu autem parentum includitur cultus omnium consanguineorum, quia etiam *consanguinei* ex hoc dicuntur quod ex eisdem parentibus processerunt. . . .) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 101, a. 1.

rights are as vague as his obligation; the parents' responsibilities as dimly seen as their duties. It is a topsy-turvy domestic world committed to a condition of civil war and selfish rivalry. It is a dishonest establishment, since it has eliminated the fundamental honesty involved in the recognition of the fundamental domestic debt. It is no place of privilege or perfection for the child, who is given no reason here for that reverence, honor and subjection that would do so much to perfect him; there is no hierarchy here, the child must fight for what he can get, and, of course, the child loses, never more emphatically than when he has his way.

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Virtue of Service to Country—Patriotism

Patriotism, or piety towards one's country, is the next virtue in the descending scale of these virtues which deal with unpayable debts. It operates in the particularized field delimited by the principality of one's country in the being and government of a man. It is a principle of being in a tertiary sense, below the secondary principles who are the parents; it is a principle of government in a secondary sense, beneath the first principle of government who is God. This has all been explained in the past few pages. In this sense, a man's country is one of his sources, his principles; as such it lays valid claim in justice to reverence, honor and subjection from him. The facing of this debt is, in the patriotic field, a matter of order, honesty, and privilege as it was in the domestic and religious domains.

The common good is not the object of patriotism, any more than the goodness of God, or the welfare of the parents is the object of religion and piety. These virtues do not look to the good but to the excellent by reason of principality; what patriotism aims at is the recognition of the superiority of one's country, in the limited field of its superiority, and the subjection of man in that same limited field. Patriotism, then, is not primarily a matter of love of country as it is a matter of service to country, fundamentally, the service implied in the veneration

of country that includes reverence, honor and subjection. Love of country contributes to patriotism, as patriotism does to love of country; but they must be clearly distinguished, as charity and religion must be distinguished, if we are to understand the true place and dignity of patriotism.

Preserving the proper proportions, all that was said of religion and of piety must be repeated of patriotism. It guarantees the fundamental order in the national scene, showing a man his proper place by insisting on what is above him; thereby letting him know with certainty what is beneath him, that he might protect his rights as well as fulfill his duties. Patriotism is primarily a matter of honesty, not of sentiment; there cannot be too much of it, nor is the least offering to be despised if the will behind it is above the reproach of stinginess or selfishness in payment of this unpayable debt.

It, too, has its external and internal acts, of which the external are ordered to the internal. In our usual consideration of patriotic acts, we concentrate on the good to the state coming from them; actually, they exist for the internal act of patriotism by which a man really pays on the debt to his principles of being and government. For the payment of this debt is not for the utility of the principles but of the debtors to those principles; it does not, itself, add to the principality of the state, but it does, in itself, add considerably to the perfection of the citizen. For the object of patriotism is not the common good, but the debt owed to the principality of the state; it exists for the ordering of a man within the national life, and for the ordering of all his acts that contribute to that national life.[41]

For the activity of patriotism, it is necessary to have, by way of disposition, a certain cleanliness and stability, on proportionately the same grounds as was outlined above for the activities of the virtues of religion and piety. For patriotism, too, looks

[41] "Piety extends to our country in so far as the latter is for us a principle of being: but legal justice regards the good of our country, considered as the common good . . ." (. . . pietas se extendit ad patriam, secundum quod est nobis quoddam essendi principium; sed justitia legalis respicit bonum patriae, secundum quod est bonum commune: . . .) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 101, a. 3, ad 3um.

to superior principles; cleanliness is essential for the vision of superior things, stability for the continued contact with principles.

Without patriotism, the nation is no longer a community but a mob whose members are intent on destroying each other. There is no order, no hierarchy, no basis for anything but chaos. No reverence, honor or subjection. Consequently, the national life of the community is basically undermined by a fundamental dishonesty which totally disregards the fundamental debt of the citizen. The individual citizen, of course, loses; he has no place here, all the privileges of his place and the perfection of it is denied him; he cannot detect usurpers of his rights, nor defend himself against them. The national life going on about him must be as terrifying to the individual citizen as the ravings of a maniac are to a sane, normal person.[42]

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Virtue of Service to Men—Observance

The virtue of observance has to do with a double debt, the debt owed to those in authority and that owed to superiors in virtue and knowledge. St. Thomas insists that both are unpayable, but not for the same reason: the virtuous and the learned cannot, on that score alone, lay claim to principality over other men; while those constituted in authority unquestionably do participate in the principality of the state.

. . . the fact that a man has perfection of science and virtue does not give him the character of a principle in relation to others, but merely a certain excellence in himself.[43]

It belongs to persons in positions of dignity to govern subjects. Now to govern is to move certain ones to their due end: . . . But

[42] A detailed analysis of the virtue of patriotism can be found in *Qualities of Citizenship in St. Thomas*, by Gerard Joubert, O.P., Catholic Univ. Press (Washington, 1942).

[43] Ex hoc autem quod aliquis habet perfectionem scientiae vel virtutis, non sortitur rationem principii quantum ad alios, sed solum quamdam excellentiam in seipso. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 1, ad 2um.

every mover has a certain excellence and power over that which is moved. Wherefore a person in a position of dignity is an object of twofold consideration: first, in so far as he obtains excellence of position, together with a certain power over subjects: secondly, as regards the exercise of his government. In respect of his excellence there is due to him honor, which is the recognition of some kind of excellence; and in respect of the exercise of his government, there is due to him worship, consisting in rendering him service, by obeying his commands, and by repaying him, according to one's faculty, for the benefits we receive from him.[44]

The man constituted in authority, precisely as such, participates the principality of the state. When service to him is viewed formally in relation to the common good, that service is a work of patriotism and deserves no further treatment here. But when it is viewed in a more personal fashion, in relation, namely, to the glory or utility of the one constituted in authority, then it comes squarely under observance. It is in just this way that we are talking about the principality of legitimately constituted superiors and the debt owed them when we speak of the virtue of observance.[45] In this sense there is little difficulty appreciating the validity of the superiority to which the debt of reverence and subjection are due. It is a shared principality—shared either with the parents or with the state according to the particular office and work of this individual

[44] . . . ad eos qui sunt in dignitate constituti, pertinet gubernare subditos. Gubernare autem est movere aliquos in debitum finem, . . . Omne autem movens habet excellentiam quamdam et virtutem supra id quod movetur. Unde oportet quod in eo qui est in dignitati constitutus, *primo* consideretur excellentia status cum quadam potestate in subditos; *secundo*, ipsum gubernationis officium. Ratione igitur excellentiae debetur ei honor, qui est quaedam recognitio excellentiae alicujus; ratione autem officii gubernationis, debetur ei cultus, qui in quodam obsequio consistit, dum, scilicet aliquis obedit eorum imperio, et vicem beneficiis eorum pro suo modo rependit. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 2.

[45] . . . personis in dignitate constitutis potest aliquid exhiberi dupliciter: uno modo in ordine ad bonum commune, puta cum aliquis eis servit in administratione reipublicae: et hoc jam non pertinet ad observantiam, sed ad pietatem, quae cultum exhibet non solum patri, sed etiam patriae. Alio modo exhibetur aliquid personis in dignitate constitutis pertinens specialiter ad personalem eorum utilitate vel gloriam: et hoc proprie pertinet ad observantiam secundum quod a pietate distinguitur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 3.

superior—and partakes of the same character of a debt beyond our power to pay. All that was said, then, of religion, piety, and patriotism, carefully preserving the proper proportion of a steadily diminishing principality, must be said of the virtue of observance in regard to those constituted in authority. It hardly seems necessary to repeat those details again in this paper, particularly if it is kept in mind that all these virtues are concerned with a fundamental order, and that their absence means chaos in the particular field of action proper to each virtue.

The debt owed to the learned and virtuous is, however, another matter. St. Thomas himself insisted that such pre-eminence did not give one man principality over another, as we have noted on the preceding page. It might be argued that excellence in learning and knowledge, in whomever it is found, is a kind of principle to others by way of inspiration and emulation moving other men to greater efforts. St. Thomas seems to suggest that this excellence in learning and virtue makes men potentially constituted in authority,[46] though he does not press the point as the basis for honor and reverence to these people; he merely uses this as an explanation of why he reduces such honor and reverence to the virtue of observance.

The real reason why men incur a debt to the virtuous and learned is not because of the principality they enjoy over other men, but simply because virtue and learning are things for which no payment can be made. The implication plainly made here is that such excellence is a boon to those who haven't got it, as well as a perfection of those who have.[47] In this light,

[46] "Yet, forasmuch as science, virtue and all like things render a man fit for positions of dignity, the respect which is paid to anyone on account of any excellence whatever belongs to the same virtue." (Verum, quia per scientiam et virtutem, et omnia alia hujusmodi aliquis idoneus redditur ad dignitatis statum, reverentia quae propter quamcumque excellentiam aliquibus exhibetur, ad eandem virtutem pertinet.) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 1, ad 2um.

[47] "It belongs to special justice, properly speaking, to pay the equivalent to those to whom we owe anything. Now this cannot be done to the virtuous, and to those who make good use of their position of dignity, as neither can it be done to God, nor to our parents." (. . . ad justitiam specialem proprie sumptam pertinet reddere

observance furnishes a fundamental principle of order to the social life of men. It is highly unlikely that we shall ever meet a man who is inferior to us in every way; that is, in every man there will be some title to superiority on the basis of which he has just claim to the payment we reserve for unpayable debts, namely, honor and reverence, with a certain amount of subjection. It is worth noting that there is no question here of mineral, plant, or animal excellence in our neighbors; but of excellence of mind and will, the distinctively spiritual excellencies. Contempt for men, then, would necessarily involve an inversion of the social order possible only in a condition of blindness that would obscure all of another man's excellency.

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Primary Act of Religion—Devotion (Religious Morale)

These household virtues of religion, piety, patriotism, and observance are the virtues which attend to the orderly management of a man's life with God, with his family, with his fellow citizens, and with his fellow men. As virtues, they are good habits which, therefore, exist for the acts which spring from them. As we have seen, all of them have both internal and external acts, of which the external exist for the internal acts.

aequale ei cui aliquid debetur. Quod quidem non potest fieri ad virtuosos et ad eos qui bene statu dignitatis utuntur, sicut nec ad Deum, nec ad parentes.) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 1, ad 3um.

" Wherefore in two ways may a virtue directed to another person fall short of the perfection of justice: first, by falling short of the aspect of equality; . . . For certain virtues there are which render another his due, but are unable to render equal due. In the first place, whatever man renders to God is due, yet it cannot be equal. . . . Secondly, it is not possible to make to one's parents an equal return. . . . Thirdly . . . man is unable to offer an equal meed for virtue. . . ." (Dupliciter ergo aliqua virtus ad alterum existens a ratione justitiae deficit a ratione aequalis; uno modo, in quantum deficit a ratione debiti. Sunt enim quaedam virtutes quae debitum quidem alteri reddunt, sed non possunt reddere aequale. Et primo quidem quidquid ab homine Deo redditur, debitum est, non tamen potest esse aequale . . . Secundo, parentibus non potest secundum aequalitatem recompensari. . . . Tertio, non potest secundum aequale praemium recompensari ab homine virtus. . . .) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 80, a. unic.

Among these internal acts, one will be first. This one act, then, is the immediate reason for the existence of the virtue and for all the other acts of the virtue; in the analysis of that one act, we have the quintessence of the virtue and all its activity.

We have seen the ordered interrelation of these virtues; they begin with religion and descend in a gradual scale proportioned to the gradually diminishing participation in the principality that in its fullness is proper to God. What is said of one of them can be said of all the others, keeping the proper proportion of the principles to which they make payment on an unpayable debt. This same thing, then, will be true of the acts of these virtues, and particularly of the first act to which all others are ordered; what can be said, for instance, of the first act of religion can also be said of the first act of piety, of patriotism, and of observance—always keeping the proper proportion of these virtues. If, then, we can obtain a sharp, accurate knowledge of the first act of religion, we have the key to the secret of the orderly management of all man's relations with others: with God, with family, with country, with fellow men.

This first act of religion is called devotion.[48]

Devotion comes from the idea of dedication and those were called devout or devoted who in some way dedicated themselves to God so as to be utterly His. Therefore devotion is nothing other than promptitude of will in those things that concern the worship of God. Since it is evident that this is a special act, it follows that devotion is a special act of the will.[49]

[48] An exhaustive study of the texts of St. Thomas to trace the development of his thought on devotion can be found in "The Thomistic Concept of Devotion," by John W. Curran, O.P., The Thomist, Vol. II, no. 3 & 4 (July, 1940 and October, 1940). This study is of considerable importance, for St. Thomas' solution of the problem of devotion is one of his strikingly original contributions to theological thought.

[49] Devotio dicitur a devovendo: unde devoti dicuntur qui seipsos quodammodo Deo devovent ut ei se totaliter subdant; . . . Unde devotio nihil aliud esse videtur quam voluntas quaedam prompte tradendi se ad ea quae pertinent ad Dei famulatum. . . . Manifestum est autem quod voluntas prompte faciendi quod ad Dei servitium pertinet, est quidem specialis actus. Unde devotio est specialis actus voluntatis." *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 1.

Devotion is the act of the will by which man offers himself to God to serve Him Who is the ultimate end.[50]

We are not far wrong in the use of the word in its adjectival form, speaking of a devout prayer, a devoted wife, a devoted patriot, devoted children; for in all of these cases we are emphasizing the reverence, honor and subjection that is expressed in particularly willing service.

Devotion is the first and most important act of religion. The internal acts, as we have seen, are the most important acts of religion; of these there are just two, namely, devotion and prayer. Devotion is the more important of these two.

The will moves the other powers of the soul to its end, . . . and therefore religion, which is in the will, directs the acts of the other powers to the reverence of God. Now among the other powers of the soul the intellect is the highest, and the nearest to the will; and consequently after devotion which belongs to the will, prayer which belongs to the intellective part is the chief of the acts of religion, since by it religion directs man's intellect to God.[51]

It is easy to understand the importance of the key position of devotion if we follow the three immediate implications of its source in the will of man. It subjects the will of the creature to the Creator; the whole will, for devotion has no other material than willing to offer. Now the whole moral life of a man is successful or unsuccessful according to the nod his will gives to virtue or to vice; the consent of the will is, by devotion, given to the service of God. Thus, the whole moral life of a man is offered in the act of devotion.[52] We must be careful here not to identify devotion with its heroic degree, just as we must not

[50] . . . devotio sit actus voluntatis hominis offerentis seipsum Deo ad ei serviendum, qui est ultimus finis, . . . *Ibid.*, ad 1um.

[51] . . . voluntas movet alias potentias animae in suum finem, . . . et ideo religio, quae est in voluntate, ordinat actus aliarum potentiarum ad Dei reverentiam. Inter alias autem potentias animae intellectus altior est, et voluntati propinquior; et ideo post devotionem, quae pertinet ad ipsam voluntatem, oratio quae pertinet ad partem intellectivam, est praecipua inter actus religionis, per quam religio intellectum hominis movet in Deum. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 83, a. 3, ad 1um.

[52] Curran, "The Thomistic Concept of Devotion," The Thomist, II, 4, p. 554, 574, 578.

identify charity with heroic sanctity. Any degree of devotion offers the whole will of man to the service of God, as any degree of charity loves God above all things; and devotion is, in fact, found in beginners and the imperfect, as also is true charity.

Devotion not only offers the whole will, it offers a prompt will. Devotion offers the will itself to God. " And since it is impossible to conceive of sluggishness in such an offering, a special promptitude is to be found in devotion," [53] not as a mere accidental mode of the act of devotion, but as part and parcel of that act.

Finally, devotion stamps a mode upon every other act of religion, and every other act that is ordered to the service of God.

> The mover prescribes the mode of the movement of the thing moved. Now the will moves the other powers of the soul to their acts, and the will, in so far as it regards the end, moves both itself and whatever is directed to the end. . . . Wherefore, since devotion is an act of the will whereby a man offers himself for the service of God Who is the last end, it follows that devotion prescribes the mode to human acts, whether they be acts of the will itself about things directed to the end, or acts of the other powers that are moved by the will.[54]

The mode imposed by devotion on every other act of religion is that of prompt, even eager, service.

Obviously, then, devotion is not to be detected by touch, sight or smell; the " odor of sanctity " is a purely metaphorical description. This act of religion is an act of the will; not a matter of emotion. Without it there are no acts of religion; the payments on the unpayable debt of religion are made with prompt will or they are not made at all. This act of devotion is

[53] *Ibid.*, pp. 576, 577.

[54] . . . movens imponit modum motui mobilis. Voluntas autem movet alias vires animae ad suos actus; et voluntas secundum quod est finis, movet seipsam ad ea quae sunt ad finem. . . . Et ideo cum devotio sit actus voluntatis hominis offerentis seipsum Deo ad ei serviendum, qui est ultimus finis, consequens est quod devotio imponat modum humanis actibus, sive sint actus ipsius voluntatis circa ea quae sunt ad finem, sive etiam sint actus aliarum potentiarum, quae a voluntate moventur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 1, ad 1um.

the core of man's religious life; that life stands or falls with the presence or absence of devotion.

This act of devotion in its highest degree is what we mean by the human side of religious vocation. This eager will to serve God, carried to the length of stripping oneself of all else that the service might be complete, is what we mean when we say that this person has a vocation. This is the thing to be fostered, protected, nourished for the good of the Church and the welfare of men. This is religious morale in its highest form. To know the causes of devotion, to be aware of the threats to it and the impediments that hinder it, is to be in a position to work most effectively in the cause of vocations.

God is the principal and extrinsic cause of this all-important act of devotion. Nevertheless, there is much to be done on our side, both by way of causing devotion and by way of removing the impediments to it. Considering the fundamental importance of devotion for all of a man's religious and moral life, the concrete determination of our possibilities in its production is worthy of the most careful consideration.

First of all, we can, obviously, prepare ourselves.

It belongs to a virtuous man not only to make good use of his matter or instrument, but also to prepare opportunities for that good use.[55]

He that prepares not his soul before prayer by forgiving those against whom he has anything, or in some other way disposing himself to devotion, does not do what he can to be heard by God, wherefore he tempts God implicitly as it were. And though this implicit temptation would seem to arise from presumption or indiscretion, yet the very fact that a man behaves presumptuously and without due care in matters relating to God implies irreverence towards Him.[56]

[55] Ad virtuosum pertinet non solum convenienter uti sua materia vel instrumento, sed etiam praeparare opportunitates ad bene utendum; . . . *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 117, a. 3, ad 2um.

[56] Ille qui ante orationem animam suam non praeparat, dimittendo quid adversum aliquam habet, vel alias ad devotionem se non disponendo, non facit quod in se est, ut exaudiatur a Deo; et ideo quasi interpretative tentat Deum. Et quamvis hujusmodi interpretativa tentatio videatur ex praesumptione seu indiscretione pro-

Our preparation, in other words, must at least consist in removing the impediments to devotion. Where there is no concrete impediment, there still must be some positive preparation for this first and all-important act of religion.

Among the impediments mentioned, just in passing, by St. Thomas are all those inferior things that enmesh the mind of man and debase it,[57] since without purity the mind cannot be applied to God. Then, too, there is the consideration of all foreign matters that distract the mind from things that are apt to awaken the love of God within us.[58] Perhaps some of the most powerful impediments to devotion are to be found in those things that contribute, at least in their disordered state, to self-sufficiency and presumption.

> Science, and anything else conducive to greatness, is to man an occasion of self-confidence, so that he does not wholly surrender himself to God. The result is that such-like things sometimes occasion a hindrance to devotion; while in simple souls and women devotion abounds by repressing pride.[59]

With these impediments eliminated, we are ready, on our side, to put the positive causes of devotion to work. One of these is, of course, love.

> . . . charity both causes devotion (inasmuch as love makes one prompt to serve one's friend) and feeds on devotion. Even as all friendship is safeguarded and increased by the practice and consideration of friendly deeds.[60]

venire, tamen hoc ipsum ad irreverentiam Dei pertinet quod homo praesumptuose et sine debita diligentia se habeat in his quae ad Deum pertinent. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 97, a. 3, ad 2um.

[57] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 81, a. 8 corp. vid. *supra*, footnote 18.

[58] . . . the consideration of anything whatsoever that does not pertain to things apt to awaken our love of God but distracts our mind from them impedes devotion (consideratio quorumcumque ad hoc non pertinentium, sed ab eis mentem distrahentium, impedit devotionem.) *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 3, ad 1um.

[59] Scientia et quidquid aliud ad magnitudinem pertinet, occasio est quod homo confidat de seipso; et ideo non totaliter se Deo tradat. Et inde est quod hujusmodi quandoque occasionaliter devotionem impediunt; et in simplicibus et mulieribus devotio abundat, elationem comprimendo. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 3, ad 3um.

[60] . . . charitas et devotionem causat, in quantum ex amore aliquis redditur

. . . this consideration (of God's goodness) awakens love which is the proximate cause of devotion.[61]

The root cause of devotion, however, from the aspect of our part in it, is meditation. The matter is so important that we had better let St. Thomas talk for himself at some length.

But the intrinsic cause on our part must needs be meditation or contemplation. For it was stated above that devotion is an act of the will to the effect that man surrenders himself promptly to the service of God. Now every act of the will proceeds from some consideration, since the object of the will is a good understood. . . . Consequently meditation must needs be the cause of devotion, in so far as through meditation man conceives the thought of surrendering himself to God's service. Indeed a twofold consideration leads him thereto. The one is the consideration of God's goodness and loving kindness . . . and this consideration awakens love which is the proximate cause of devotion. The other consideration is that of man's own shortcomings, on account of which he needs to lean on God . . . and this consideration shuts out presumption whereby man is hindered from submitting to God, because he leans on his own strength.[62]

Matters concerning the Godhead are, in themselves, the strongest incentive to love and consequently to devotion, because God is supremely lovable. Yet such is the weakness of the human mind that it needs a guiding hand, not only to the knowledge, but also

promptus ad serviendum amico, et etiam per devotionem charitas nutritur; sicut et quaelibet amicitia conservatur et augetur per amicabilium operum exercitium et meditationem. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 2, ad 2um.

[61] . . . haec consideratio excitat dilectionem, quae est proxima devotionis causa. *Ibid.*, a. 3, corp.

[62] Causa autem intrinseca ex parte nostra oportet quod sit meditatio seu contemplatio. Dictum est enim art. 1 huj. quaest. quod devotio est quidam voluntatis actus ad hoc quod homo prompte se tradat ad divinum obsequium. Omnis autem actus voluntatis ex aliqua consideratione procedit, eo quod bonum intellectum est objectum voluntatis. . . . Et ideo necesse est quod meditatio sit devotionis causa, in quantum scilicet homo per meditationem concipit quod se tradat divino obsequio. Ad quod quidem inducit duplex consideratio: una quidem quae est ex parte divinae bonitatis et beneficiorum ipsius . . . et haec consideratio excitat dilectionem, quae est proxima devotionis causa. Alia vero est ex parte hominis considerantis suos defectus, ex quibus indiget ut Deo innitatur . . . ; et haec consideratio excludit praesumptionem, per quam aliquis impeditur ne Deo se subjiciat, dum suae virtuti innitur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 3.

to the love of Divine things by means of certain sensible objects known to us. Chief among these is the humanity of Christ, according to the words of the Preface, *that through knowing God visibly, we may be caught up to the love of things invisible.* Wherefore matters relating to Christ's humanity are the chief incentive to devotion, leading us thither as a guiding hand, although devotion itself has for its object matters concerning the Godhead.[63]

Meditation, then, from our side is the principal cause of devotion. It is to be noticed that St. Thomas has not made an exhaustive nor exclusive statement of the material for the meditation which leads to devotion; he has done no more than lay down the most general principles. From these principles, the world itself is laid open as a book for our meditation: anything that pertains to the goodness of God, to His loving kindness, and (though Thomas took this as obvious after all that was said on the virtue of religion and its object) anything that pertains to the excellence of the first principle. On the other hand, all that pertains to the defects of man will also lead to devotion to one who carefully considers them. By way of example, St. Thomas says that the very things that are an occasion of impeding devotion can be a cause of its increase: "If a man perfectly subjects his knowledge, or any other perfection whatever, to God, from that very fact, his devotion is increased."[64] The strong language of St. Thomas makes the formidable conclusion inescapable: without meditation there can be no devotion.

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[63] Ea quae sunt Divinitatis, sunt secundum se maxime excitantia dilectionem, et per consequens devotionem, quia Deus est super omnia diligendus; sed ex debilitate mentis humanae est quod sicut indiget manuductionem ad cognitionem divinorum, ita ad dilectionem per aliqua sensibilia nobis nota; inter quae praecipuum est humanitas Christi, secundum quod in Praefatione dicitur: *Ut, dum visibiliter Deum cognoscimus, per hunc in invisibilium amorem rapiamur.* Et ideo ea quae pertinent ad Christi humanitatem, per modum cujusdam manuductionis, maxime devotionem excitant; cum tamen devotio principaliter circa ea quae sunt Divinitatis consistat. *Ibid.*, ad 2um.

[64] Si tamen scientiam et quamcumque aliam perfectionem homo perfecte Deo subdat, ex hoc ipso devotio augetur. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 3 ad 3um.

Primary Act of Piety—Domestic Devotion (Domestic Morale)

We have seen the exact parallel and the intimate interdependence of the virtues that deal with the settlement of unpayable debts—religion, piety, patriotism, and observance. They are arranged in a descending grade, with a steadily more limited field; but so exactly parallel that what is said of one can be said of another, keeping in mind the difference in the field of each virtue. This same thing is, obviously, also true of the principal act of each of these virtues. All of them demand reverence and subjection to principles of being and operation; and that reverence and subjection is primarily in the will of men. " It belongs to the same virtue to will to do something, and to have the will prompt to do it, because both acts have the same object." [65] From this, St. Thomas concludes that devotion is an act of religion; it can be as validly concluded that each of these household virtues has a parallel act of devotion which can be accurately described from the detailed description St. Thomas has already given of religious devotion.

To escape the dangers of ambiguity, let us use the word " morale " instead of " devotion " to describe the first act of each of these virtues; thus, we shall talk of religious morale, domestic or filial morale, patriotic morale, and social morale. We are now in a position to delineate in detail what Thomas makes clear only in principle concerning the acts of these virtues under religion.

Domestic or filial morale, then, is the prompt will to give oneself to the service of parents. It effects both the reverence of parents and the subjection of children in one and the same act of veneration or service. It is a matter of order, putting both children and parents in their proper place in the family hierarchy; a matter of honesty, the payment of a debt due to the parents as principles of being and government—and this in-

[65] . . . ad eamdem virtutem pertinet velle facere aliquid, et promptam voluntatem habere ad illud faciendum, quia utriusque actus est idem objectum. *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 82, a. 2. Confer *ibid.*, q. 81, a. 1, ad 3um; q. 101, a. 1; q. 102, a. 1.

cludes generation, education, discipline, and all things that pertain to the perfection of human life; [66] a matter of privilege, for it is precisely in this subjection to a superior that the child is himself perfected.

This domestic morale is the first act of the virtue of piety. From it, and through it, all other acts that pertain to, or are ordered to, the family must flow; and this under pain of there being no family acts at all. Domestic morale puts its stamp of promptitude on all other moral acts pertaining to the family, marking them with a mode of willingness that is proper to domestic morale and shared by all other family acts; for it is the mover to the ends of the family, and its characteristics are the characteristics of all motion to the family goals.

Moreover, all other family acts, both internal and external, exist for the sustenance and increase of this family morale. It is internal and first; all external acts are ordered to the internal, and all internal acts ordered to the first internal act. The obedience, respect, courtesy and so on which is demanded of children in the name of piety, in fact all that pertains to the perfection of the child's life, are not for show, not for the gratification of the parents, but for the domestic morale which is piety's act of devotion; ultimately, then, for the reverence of parents through the perfection of the child in its inner act of domestic morale.

Domestic morale is caused by love and causes love. It is, above all, brought about through meditation (or loving thought) on the excellence of the parents as principles, on the initial and enduring dependence of the child on the parents, and on all things that reveal or emphasize either this excellence or this dependence. It is caused and increased by a conscientious preparation for family acts, and particularly for this supreme act of domestic morale. Its impediments will be all base things that enslave the mind and heart of man, things beneath the level and dignity of the family; for purity is an essential for the consideration of such superior things as the principles of our

[66] *Summa Theol.*, II-II, q. 102, a. 1.

being and government. It will be impeded by any exaggeration of the child's independence; and everything that contributes to the glorification of the child's own capacities can easily be an occasion of the presumption that nullifies the possibility of domestic morale. What lowers the child's estimation of his parents will certainly undermine, if not destroy, domestic morale. And this domestic morale will be seriously hindered by all that distracts the mind from the fundamental considerations of parental excellence and filial subjection; things, for instance, like a home that for most of the time has nobody in it, extremes of amusement, activities outside the home, or ceaseless activity within the home. Domestic morale demands, and cultivates, a certain firmness and stability, for it swings around the principles of being and government.

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Primary Act of Patriotism—Patriotic Devotion (Patriotic Morale)

The same body of truth that has been established concerning religious devotion is applicable, with the proper limitations, to the first act of the virtue of patriotism, patriotic devotion or patriotic morale. It is the prompt will to serve one's country. It is the very first act of the virtue of patriotism, the first and fundamental subjection that fixes a man's proper place, establishing the hierarchy of patriotism. With this act order is established and continued; inferior things cannot usurp places above men, men can know their rights and their duties. It, too, is a matter of order, of honesty which makes payment on an unpayable debt, and of privilege, perfecting the citizen by the very subjection to a superior. It recognizes one's country as a principle of being and of government; in that recognition there is implied the reverence for excellence and the subjection to principality which make up the essence of the honor due to one's country.

It is the first and most fundamental act of the virtue of

patriotism. From it, all other acts that pertain to or are ordered to one's country must flow; and all other acts, internal or external, are ordered to and exist for this internal act of patriotic morale. We have made much of civil obedience, of military service, of political duties, and rightly so. Yet, in emphasizing these things, it must not be overlooked that their absence is much more damaging to the delinquent citizen than it is to the country; for all these external things are for the internal act of patriotic morale which perfects the individual citizen.

Morale building, then, in the sense of patriotic morale, is not really a mysterious affair. Love of country will cause patriotic morale, and will be caused by patriotic morale; but the two are not so closely tied together as to be inextricable. Love is not the spring from which patriotic morale flows; its reverence and subjection are due to the country under the precise aspect of a principle of being and government. It is not unusual to find an intense patriotic morale in men who have been very badly treated by their country; whatever the treatment received, it still remains true that this country is a principle of their being and government.

The immediate and most direct cause of patriotic morale from our side is meditation, reiterated consideration of the excellence of that principle of our being and its consequent superiority in that limited field, and our dependence on and subjection to it. Immersion in baser things, in interests inimical to country, or beneath the dignity of patriotic thought is certainly an impediment to the development of patriotic morale; for without purity, men cannot apply their minds to superior things. What lowers our country and its leaders in our estimation is a definite impediment to morale, undermining our estimation of their excellence; it should be a grave threat indeed to the common good that would justify revelation of things that go far to impede patriotic morale. Again, what tends to exaggerate our independence of our country, in the political field in which we depend on it, is again hindrance to political morale, fostering a political presumption that is basically false.

Then, too, there must be some preparation of soul for the placing of patriotic acts, particularly of the first act which is patriotic morale. And there must be a certain firmness or stability on the part of the citizens in this matter, since they are here dealing with things as enduring and immobile as principles.

A nation that attempts to exist without patriotic morale, i. e., without the first act of patriotism, is hoping for the impossible; in fact, it is to all practical purposes already dead. Where patriotic morale is at a low ebb, that is, where this first act of patriotism is a lukewarm, flaccid thing, the country will be disordered, dishonest, and debasing to its citizens. A semblance of external order might be kept by a reign of terror, and for a short time; but the fundamental principles of order have been disregarded. Here there is no place for a man; and so, no place for his superiors or his inferiors. There is no hope for justice where the fundamental debts of the citizens are denied. There is none of the perfecting action of discipline. The external acts won by paternal bribery or terroristic brutality are by no stretch of the imagination ordered to the perfection of the individual citizen. This is a nation which is the enemy of its citizens, and whose citizens are everyone an enemy of the nation.

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Primary Act of Observance—Social Devotion (Social Morale)

Social morale, the first act of the virtue of observance, has the same role to play in the relationship of individual men that domestic morale plays in the family and patriotic morale in the state. It furnishes the foundation of mutual respect among men, recognizing and respecting superiority of virtue and learning, and the universal scope of men's varying excellencies. It, too, demands purity, abstraction of mind from baser things, and a certain stability. It, too, springs from love and causes love; it, too, demands meditation on the excellencies of men and the subjection of ourselves. It is a matter of order, of honesty, and of the privilege of perfection. Without it, men are enemies.

No surer confirmation of this need be sought than the tragic effectiveness of the tale-bearer and the gossip who focus men's minds, not on the excellencies of men, but on their deficiencies; of the braggart who focuses his attention on his own excellencies and blinds himself to his inferiority to other men better in one way or another. A veneer of civilization may hide this enmity of man to man for a time; but it is not possible to make fundamental disorder appear orderly. All other acts pertaining to or ordered to the social life of men must flow from and be ordered to this social morale, which imprints its eager stamp on every act in the properly ordered social life of men. It is a prompt will to serve men, recognizing the just grounds of that service and perfecting itself in that recognition.

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Conclusion

Before concluding this brief study, one more implication of its investigation of the virtues of service should be pointed out, that is, the very close interdependence of these virtues in a gradually descending scale. Piety hangs from religion as the superiority of parents hangs from their share in the principality of God; patriotism hangs from piety and religion; observance from religion, piety, and patriotism. Obviously, if religion is cut off at the top of this chain, the rest will not hang in mid-air; if the debt due to God is denied, the shared debt due to others will hardly be taken seriously. The collapse of morale in our time has its fundamental causes; it will not be stayed by superficial remedies.

The obvious conclusion of this study has been the identification of religious vocation, on its human side, with an intense act of devotion, the primary act of the virtue of religion. And the recognition of the first act of the virtue of patriotism as that mysterious thing which the moderns identified vaguely as " morale " has been seen as nothing other than patriotic devo-

tion, an act of virtue to be cultivated through the cultivation of the virtue.

In the course of this double clarification, much has been said of all the virtues of the household, the virtues dedicated to the service of others in payment on unpayable debts: the virtues of religion, piety, patriotism, and observance with their proper acts. There is still much to learn about these virtues and the morale which is their first and fundamental act. Indeed, this study has been hardly more than an opening up of horizons for further and much more profound thinking on the household virtues through the explicit statement of what St. Thomas left implicit in his treatment of these virtues. The further implications of such an explicit statement are so vast as to furnish abundant material for profound and extensive study. That further study must, however, be left to other and more capable hands.

WALTER FARRELL, O.P.

Dominican House of Studies,
Washington, D. C.

WAYS TO KNOW GOD

THE "SYMBOLIC THEOLOGY" OF DIONYSIUS THE AREOPAGITE AND ITS FACTUAL PRESUPPOSITIONS [1]

I. *Preparatory Considerations*

1. *The Areopagitica.* One may distinguish three main spiritual currents which powerfully fashioned Western men-

[1] The author, Sister Theresia Benedicta a Cruce, O. C. D., who in the world was Dr. Edith Stein, mailed the manuscript of this article to Professor Marvin Farber, the editor of the *Journal of Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* in the fall of 1941. Prof. Farber submitted it to the present translator for use and publication. Since then no reliable information has been obtainable on the fate the author suffered. She had left the Carmelite convent at Lindenthal-Cologne and found refuge in the convent of Echt in Holland. Because of her Jewish descent either she was forced to leave Germany or it was considered prudent to have her leave. It has been reported, by apparently reliable sources, that she was later arrested by the Germans and put in a concentration camp in Poland, where she is said to have died, presumably being killed. But no definite confirmation of this has reached this country. On Dr. Stein's previous work in philosophy and her intellectual and religious development, see the article by J. Collins, "Edith Stein and the Advance of Phenomenology," *Thought,* 1942, XVII, 685; also "The Fate of Edith Stein," *ibid.,* 1943, XVIII, 324.

The study presented here is obviously intended as a sort of introduction to further investigations into the problem indicated by the title. Whether any of these studies are extant we do not know; a great work on ontology, to which the author referred in a letter to Professor Farber of the same date as this manuscript, was completed. The printing of it, however, was forbidden by the German authorities; the fate of the book is unknown at the present time. This information is owed to the courtesy of Professor Farber.

The reader acquainted with Husserl's phenomenology will recognize his influence in the present article. It seems to have been the intention of the author to make use of certain ideas, developed within Husserl's school, for the elucidation of metaphysical and theological problems. Her having grown up, as it were, in the atmosphere of phenomenology—she was for many years Professor Husserl's assistant—causes the author to use a certain technical language the rendering of which into English is not always easy. It has been the endeavor of the translator to avoid such technicalities as far as possible, so as to make the text intelligible to those not acquainted with this particular branch of contemporary philosophy. Anyone who wishes to know more about it should consult Marvin Farber's *Phenomenology as a Method and as a Philosophical Discipline,* Buffalo, 1928. Although there remain certain passages in connection with which some explanation or comment might be desirable, the translator has refrained from adding anything to the original text. R. Allers.

tality throughout the Middle Ages and have descended from there as a still effective living heritage to our own times. Revelation as contained in the Scriptures is presupposed therein as a firm foundation. The three currents are different means by which to comprehend this Scriptural content, to appropriate it internally, to incorporate the Divine Word into the products of human endeavor, and thus to attain a living whole built up from Divine and human wisdom. The effect of these three currents is plainly visible in the work of St. Thomas, and the influence they had in later times was, perhaps, furthered more by the writings of Aquinas than by those of any other author. The three currents referred to are Greek thought, particularly that of Aristotle, the life work of St. Augustine, and the legacy of the "Areopagite." Upon the mention of these names the reader realizes immediately that there can be no question of three strictly separate currents. The minds of St. Augustine and of Dionysius were formed, each in its own way, by Greek thought; their work represents the first great attempt at clarification, which was resumed later under their guidance. For this reason the influence of these two authors is essentially of another nature than that exercised by the Greek philosophers.

Some may be surprised at seeing the "Areopagite" placed side by side with Aristotle and St. Augustine; but this is hardly an exaggeration of his influence. Acquaintance with the ideas and writings of Dionysius seems today to be limited to a small circle of specialist scholars and some few "amateurs." But the range of his influence is much wider than that of the knowledge about him. He dominated Western thought from the 9th to the 16th century, having been recognized as an authority by the Church since the 6th century and considered as one of the great sources used in the fights for purity of doctrine. In the literature on Dionysius published during the last decades the statement that this writer owed his great influence mainly to his name recurs constantly. He has so far been spoken of in the present article as the "Areopagite." This usage springs from a certain embarrassment on the part of the author. The

books under discussion emerged towards the end of the fifth century under the name of Dionysius; that is, we have no earlier testimonies of their existence. The writer did not call himself Areopagites. But he speaks of St. Paul as his teacher and he dedicated his works to a fellow priest Timotheus; he also refers in some passages, as if he were an eyewitness, to certain events which were generally considered to be the eclipses at the death of Christ and the death of the Virgin;[2] furthermore, his letters are all addressed to persons bearing names pertaining to the Apostolic age. It was, therefore, assumed that the author was no other than the member of the Areopagus of whose conversion we hear in the Acts.[3] Early doubts concerning the authorship were gradually silenced and came to the fore again only in the age of Humanism. A thorough analysis of the spiritual environment as it can be gathered from certain peculiarities of the *Areopagitica* led, a few decades ago, to the generally accepted conclusion that these texts cannot possibly have originated during the Apostolic age.[4] The majority of experts hold today that the works were written at the end of the fifth century.

It has become customary to call the author "Pseudo-Dionysius." The quotation marks used hitherto with the name "Areopagite" are, presumably, sufficient to indicate that the present writer does not consider the author of the "Areopagitica" as the disciple of St. Paul. If he is called from now on Dionysius or Areopagite, no misunderstanding need be feared. To comment on the question of who speaks by or hides under this name does not pertain to the scope of the present article. The intentions of the author in assuming the name of Areopagite cannot be determined as long as we do not know who the actual author was.

[2] *Let.* VII, *P. G.*, III, 1081 ff.; *De divin. nom.*, c. 2, § 2, *P. G.*, III, 681 ff.

[3] *Acts*, XVII, 33 f.

[4] The studies to be considered in first line are by P. J. Stiglmayr and H. Koch. For the literature on Dionysius see O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur*, Freiburg i. B., 1924, Vol. IV.

We have in our hands, however, as an indubitable possession the *corpus Dionysiacum*, consisting of four long treatises and ten letters. There are 23 Greek and 32 Latin manuscripts of these works in the Occidental libraries. The facts of the entrance into and the influence upon medieval spiritual life of this *corpus* are discernible with an unusual clarity. It is a mere legend that the Areopagite was the first bishop of Paris and buried in the Abbey of Saint Denis. But it is a historical fact that the Areopagitic writings started their victorious march through the Western world from this Abbey. It is not within the scope of this article to follow the historical development of the influence of these works. The intention is rather to present one aspect of the peculiar spiritual world to be envisioned in the Areopagitic texts and thus to allow their factual importance to shine forth. The standpoint assumed here may be of interest to the philosopher as well as to the theologian.

2. *The order of being and knowledge according to Dionysius.* Through all the existing writings of Dionysius runs one *Leitmotif*. St. Albert the Great has used, to render this fundamental idea, the words of Ecclesiastes: *Ad locum, unde exeunt, flumina revertentur, ut iterum fluant.*[5] This refers, first, to the *order of being*: every being proceeds from God as the First and turns back to Him again. The *iterum fluere* after reunion does not indicate separation but an inclining towards that which stands on a lower level to lead it upwards too. Therein is implied a further fundamental feature of the Dionysian world picture: the order of degrees or steps which he calls *Hierarchy*. He defines it as " the whole order of the holy things subjected to it." [6] The task is to lead back all creation to the Creator. Like the law of proceeding and returning, of which the hierarchy is a part, it is not only an order of being but also one of *knowledge*. A ray, proceeding from the inaccessible light which by its overluminous splendor veils the First Being to the eyes of

[5] St. Albert, *Opera*, ed. Borgnet, Paris, 1892, vol. XIV, p. 1. *Commentaria in Dionysium* (*Eccles.*, I, 7).

[6] *Hier. Eccles.*, I, § 3, *P. G.*, III, 373. ὁ πᾶς ὑποκειμένων ἱερῶν λόγος.

creatures, falls first on the beings closest to Him in the created order, that is, the pure spirits, illuminates them, and is passed on, in manifold diffraction, to the lower orders down to the lowest capable of illumination. This applies, in a certain sense, to any being whatsoever. Not all things, indeed, can receive Divine illumination in such a manner as to become capable of the knowledge of God and of a free striving towards Him; this is the case only with the created spirits, angels and men. But even the lowest creatures, devoid of reason and life, may serve as tools and *symbols* of Divine Being and Operation. To this extent they too are part of the hierarchical order of being and knowledge, and accordingly are mentioned in the Areopagitic treatises on the Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchies. But only the heavenly spirits and the ordained members of the Church are *carriers* of the hierarchical operation, messengers of God, destined to carry the Divine light through creation.

3. *The Degrees of "Theology."* The following discussion will consider in some detail one particular aspect of the wider context which the foregoing introductory remarks have sketched. It is the doctrine contained in the Areopagitic texts on the knowledge of God, which is in fact the only knowledge with which Dionysius is truly concerned. He has given a brief survey in his work on *Mystical Theology*,[7] a work of only a few pages but of great importance because of its content and the enormous influence it gained. It is to this treatise that Dionysius owes his name "Father of Mystics." This small work must not, however, be considered as if it were a treatise on mysticism or a theory of mysticism in the modern sense. To avoid this misunderstanding in the very beginning, one has to realize the meaning the Areopagite gives to the term "theology"; he does not conceive of it as either a science or a systematic doctrine about God. The students of Dionysius emphasize that by "theology" he means the Scriptures, the word of God, and by "theologians" he means the authors of the holy books. This is indubitably true; even a desultory perusal of the Aeropagitica

[7] *P. G.*, III, 997 ff.

easily convinces the reader that the terms are mostly employed in the sense indicated. But this interpretation does not, it would seem, do full justice to the texts. The very name of "Mystical Theology" points to the essential meaning, because it no longer refers—as will become evident presently—to a *speaking* about God. By applying the name of theologian to Daniel, Ezechiel, or St. Peter, Dionysius intends to indicate not only that these men are the authors of the books or letters bearing their names, but also that they are *inspired*—according to our parlance—and that they speak of God because God has taken hold of them, or that *God speaks through them.* In this sense, the angels too are theologians, and Christ is the highest of all theologians as the living Word of God. We reach finally a point where God Himself has to be designated as the First Theologian. The diverse theologies distinguished in the theatise on *Mystical Theology* are, therefore, not "disciplines" or branches of science, but *diverse manners of speaking of God* and the diverse ways or modes of the knowledge of God (or of our non-knowledge of Him) expressed thereby. Mystical theology figures as the highest degree of this knowledge. The best rendering of "mystical theology" would perhaps be "secret revelation." God is known only when He reveals Himself, and the spirits to whom He reveals Himself pass on the revelation. Knowledge and manifestation belong together. The higher, however, the degree of knowledge, the more dark and mysterious it becomes, the less it proves feasible to express it in words. The ascent to God is an ascent in darkness and silence.[8] While still at the foot of the mountain, one may find expressions which prove somehow adequate expressions. Dionysius himself used such terms in the works he dedicated to positive theology,[9] i. e., in the treatises dealing with the chief truths of faith, particularly with the doctrine on the Trinity and the Incarnation, which he

[8] The image of the ascent of a mountain is taken from the story of Moses climbing the holy mount (*Exod.* XIX) which Dionysius interprets, in accordance with Patristic tradition, in a mystical sense. *Theol. Myst.* I, § 3, *P. G.*, III, 969 ff.

[9] "Positive" is used here as opposed to "negative," not in today's general use of opposed to "speculative."

says are discussed more fully in his *Fundamentals of Theology*,[10] and also in relation to the meaning of the Divine names taken from the spiritual, to which questions he devoted his work on *Divine Names*.[11]

The *Symbolic Theology*, on the other hand, studies the names which are applied to things Divine but taken from the sensible world. This treatise has not been preserved. The Areopagite speaks of the mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation in the second chapter of the treatise *On Divine Names* [12] when he distinguishes the " theology of difference " from the " theology of unity "; the former deals with the properties of the Divine *Persons*, the latter with the attributes of the *whole Deity*. Longer expositions on symbolic theology, as understood here, are contained in the second and the fifteenth chapters of the *Celestial Hierarchy* [13] and in the ninth letter to Titus.[14] A detailed statement is found in *On Divine Names*, c. III, sec. 5.[15]

The approach which starts from the sensible world is the lowest of all and allows for breadth. Dionysius declares that it amounts to a relaxation of the mind when it steps down, in the *Celestial Hierarchy*, from the purely spiritual vision " into the width of manifold shapes of diverse kinds," that is, to the level of the angels.[16] The more simple the object—and its simplicity increases with the degree of spirituality—the greater the range to be embraced by one look, namely, a spiritual look to achieve

[10] This work is lost. The critics do not believe that it ever existed or that any others existed of those to which the author refers but which are not contained in the *corpus Areopagiticum*. Cf. Hugo Koch, " Der pseudoepigraphische Charakter der dionysischen Schriften," *Theol. Quart. Schr.*, 1895, LXXVII, 362 ff.

[11] Scheeben, *Dogmatik*, Freiburg i. B., 1873, vol. I, p. 423, refers to this treatise as " the richest work of Patristic times dealing *ex professo* with the whole doctrine *De Deo uno*." This evaluation refers to the Dionysian text plus the commentary by Maximus Confessor.

[12] *P. G.*, III, 635 ff.

[13] *P. G.*, III, 135 ff., 325 ff.

[14] *P. G.*, III, 1103 ff.

[15] *P. G.*, III, 913 ff. If one were not to limit the meaning of " theology " to words, but to extend it to all kinds of discussion of things Divine, one would have to take account of the whole treatise on *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*; to make use of the narrower sense appears, however, advisable, if only for external reasons.

[16] *P. G.*, III, 1033 f.

which the mind must concentrate itself with a greater effort than it needs in the contemplation of the sensible world, and the greater also becomes the wealth of meaning expressed by brief words. Accordingly the *Fundamentals of Theology* and the treatise *On Divine Names* permitted a briefer treatment than proved feasible in the *Symbolic Theology*. Now, however, on the level of " mystical theology " we are going to " encounter, in the immersion into the darkness which is above all comprehension, not only poverty of words but a total lack of words and of understanding." [17]

The way leading to this knowledge is that of *negation*: the approach to God by the denial of that which He is not. This procedure is also one of ascent since it begins at the lowest level. Positive theology uses the opposite procedure. To ascertain anything in regard to that which is fundamentally beyond all positing one has to begin, in positive theology, with that which is more closely related to the object. God is, indeed, in a higher sense life or goodness than He is air or stone. Negation, on the contrary, must start with things most distant from Him; it is true in a higher sense that He is not drunken or angry than that He is not known or named. Negative theology thus climbs the scale of creation to ascertain on each of its steps that the Creator is not to be found there. It proceeds farther and examines all the names positive theology attributes to Him, and sees itself forced to declare that the meaning of these names does not prove adequate to Him Who is above all sense. Negative theology is finally compelled to abolish itself, since negation applies to Him as little as affirmation. " And if we affirm or deny anything of that which comes after Him, we neither affirm or deny Him, because He is above all affirmation as the perfect and unique cause of all things, and above all negation as the supereminence of that which is simply absolute (in the literal sense, sc., of " detached from everything ") and above and beyond everything." [18] Positive and negative the-

[17] *P. G.*, III, 1047 f. [18] *P. G.*, III, 1047 f.

ology thus give way to mystical theology when the ascent has been achieved; this theology ends in complete silence and the union with the ineffable. Positive and negative theology represent the steps leading upward to the summit of the mountain. They appear, at first sight, as two different ways by which to determine the Creator in starting from creation. Their opposition, however, proves to be not exclusive. They complement one another on every one of the steps. Positive theology rests on the analogy of being between Creator and creature, the *analogia entis*, as St. Thomas says, following Aristotle.[19] Negative theology rests on the fact that there exists side by side with the "similarity" a "greater dissimilarity," as St. Thomas never ceases to point out. Both theologies coincide on the height of "mystical theology," in which God Himself unveils His mysteries but at the same time makes us realize their impenetrability.

II. *Symbolic Theology*

1. *The Areopagitica on "symbolic theology."* Dionysius lists "symbolic theology" as the lowest degree of positive theology. As has been remarked before there are many references to a book dealing specifically with this topic; this book has not been preserved. His notion of symbolic theology must be gleaned, therefore, from pertinent remarks in the texts at our disposal.

The most explicit statement is found in the ninth letter to Titus.[20] The holy authors, he says, have presented the mysterious truth which is beyond the grasp of the uninitiated, by means of images to be deciphered like puzzles. Likewise, Truth Eternal, the very fount of life, shows Itself in the Divine Mysteries, i. e., the Eucharist, concealed behind the veil of sensible shapes. Such a language of images demands an exegesis

[19] Aristotle, *Met.* V, 1116 b 21; Aquinas, *Q. D. de ver.* q. 1, a. 10, ad 1m. In the latter text there is also reference to the "greater dissimilarity."

[20] *P. G.*, III, 1103 ff. The "letters" of Dionysius are to be considered, probably, not as letters properly so called but as short treatises cast into this less rigid form which allows for the presentation of remarks complementary to the longer works.

that crude misunderstandings be avoided; otherwise expressions like " God's womb " from which proceeds the Son, or the " breath of His mouth," or God's " wrath," or " ebriety," or " sleep " might be taken in their literal sense. Holy Writ is full of such images, apt to scandalize persons lacking proper understanding. But one able to envision the beauty hidden beneath the image will find them full of God-revealing light. It is the purpose of these metaphorical expressions to conceal the holy from the desecrating eyes of the multitude and to reveal it to those who, striving for holiness, have freed themselves of childish habits of thought and have acquired the acuity of mind necessary for the contemplation of simple truths. Thus all teachers of the Old and the New Covenant have announced God by means of suitable images; and the angels have manifested the things divine in mysterious images. Jesus Himself has spoken in parables and instituted the Blessed Sacrament in the image of the Supper. It corresponds to human nature that the light of divine knowledge be attained in such a manner. Our life is, in fact, divided and undivided at the same time. That part of the soul which is not under the necessity of receiving sensible impressions could be destined for the simple and internal contemplation of divine images; it is, however, commensurate to that part of the soul which is subjected to impressions to be lifted upwards to things divine by typical symbols.[21]

According to the words of St. Paul, the whole visible creation is placed before the invisible essence of God.[22] Therefore, the holy authors considered some things only in regard to civil relations and laws, others in full purity; some in a human manner, others supernaturally and in a perfect manner. One must rise above the customary interpretation and endeavor to penetrate into the meaning of the holy signs and images in a manner appropriate to holy things to understand, for example, the image of " fire " which the Scriptures use not only for God Himself,[23] but also for His word[24] and for the heavenly spirits,

[21] *P. G.*, III, 1103, § 1.
[22] The reference is probably to *Rom.*, I, 20.
[23] *Deuter.*, IV, 11 ff., and 24.
[24] *Ps.*, XVII, 31.

though not in the same sense in each case. A further explicitation and interpretation is given, not in this text but in the *Celestial Hierarchy*.[25] When speaking of the angels the author refers to wheels and living beings made of fire, men fulgurating like fire, heaps of glowing coal, and streams of fire flowing with powerful noise. The Thrones are called fiery, and the name of the Seraphim is interpreted as meaning "the burning." This preferred image is used to express the likeness of the heavenly spirits to God. That the same image is employed so frequently for God Himself must have its reason in the fact that fire has many properties making it suitable for rendering concrete the Divine Essence: "The sensible fire is, if one may say so, within all things, passes through all of them, staying pure in itself, and it is received by all things; although it is wholly luminous, it is at the same time also hidden and remains unknown, unless it meets some substance in which it may manifest its power; it is unmeasurable and invisible, dominates and leads all wherein it is to achieve the proper work; it has the power to alter things and allows everything coming close to it to participate in its nature; it renews everything by vital warmth and illuminates by the lightning shining forth openly . . . ; it has the force to separate and is immutable; it mounts upwards and is penetrating . . . ; always mobile, it moves itself and other things; it has the power to comprise other things and is never comprised by them; it is not in need of any other thing; it reveals the loftiness of its being in all things capable of receiving it . . . ; however much it communicates itself by illuminating, it is never diminished thereby." One cannot fail to recognize in this description of fire traits reminiscent of the statements on Divine Wisdom; [26] the modes of speech by means of images and without them explain one another.

Another image too, namely, that of the mixing bowl, seems to be taken from the Books of Wisdom; Dionysius comments thereon also in the ninth letter.[27] The Scriptures say of the

[25] *P. G.*, III, 327; c. XV, § 2. [26] *Wisdom*, VII, 22 ff.

[27] *Prov.*, IX, 2 f, says that Wisdom mixes the wine; the mixing bowl itself is not named.

generous Wisdom that it sets up a mysterious mixing bowl and dispenses the salutary potion; but first it sets up solid food and, raising its voice, kindly invites all who need it. Divine Wisdom thus dispenses two kinds of food, one solid and durable and one liquid and poured out, and in the mixing bowl it dispenses its goodness which takes care of every being. The mixing bowl, which is round and open, serves as a symbol of the all-comprising Providence which simultaneously penetrates and includes everything. It remains within Itself while proceeding towards all things, stable in immovable sameness, and so stands the mixing bowl constantly and firmly. But it is said that Wisdom builds a house for Herself and there serves the solid food and provides cups and the mixing bowl; by this it is made clear to all who adequately consider things divine how Wisdom is at all times and forever the perfect originator of being and of well-being, how She goes forth to everything, unfolds in the universe and surrounds all things; and the same (originator) is also in an eminent sense within Himself and absolutely not and in no wise whatsoever in any of the things, but separate from all and the same in Himself in the same manner, eternally being and persistent, always behaving in the same manner, never proceeding out of Himself or leaving His proper seat or His immovable abode and His domestic hearth; rather, staying therein (or in Herself) she (Wisdom) achieves the whole and perfect work of Providence, at the same time going forth to everything and remaining within Herself, simultaneously standing and moved, and not standing and not moved, but, so to speak, possessing the operation of Her providence in permanence and the permanence of Her providence in a manner at the same time commensurate to and transcending nature.[28]

" But what is the solid and what the liquid food? It is said, indeed, of the generous Wisdom that it dispenses and provides both. The solid food signifies, I believe, the spiritual and lasting perfection; by this the spiritual senses of those to whom divine St. Paul, drawing from the well of Wisdom, attributes a share

[28] *P. G.*, III, 1109 f.; c. 1, § 8.

in the truly solid food, are enabled to participate in the Divine with a steady, powerful, unified, and undivided knowledge. The liquid food, on the other hand, signifies, as I see it, the doctrine which, spread out and flowing forth, tends to pass beyond everything and lead its pupils through the manifold, the diverse, and the divided to the simple and undivided knowledge of God by means adjusted to the pupils (that is, to their ability to understand). For that same reason the spiritual and divine words are compared to dew and water or to milk, wine, and honey, because they possess the power to generate life like water, to further growth like milk, to revive like wine, to cleanse and also to preserve like honey. This indeed is the gift of Divine Wisdom to Her followers, that She provides them with an abundance of plenty and indestructible joy. This means truly to feed, and therefore She is praised as giving life and feeding men and also as reviving and effecting perfection." [29]

A similar mode of expression is apparent when reference is made to the "ebriety" of God to indicate the inexpressible abundant overflow of all goodness which is in God, in the sense of its origin, before it is sent out. The senselessness, however, which is characteristic of the state of drunkenness must be related to the eminence of God, to His transcending all senses, to the fact that He is above all knowing and being known, even above all being. Thus also, the feast of the Saints in the heavenly kingdom signifies the singleminded community of the Saints in the fruition of Divine goodness and the plenitude of the goods they enjoy; their victory signifies that they rest from all labors, the invulnerability of their life, their moving in the light and the realm of the living, since Jesus gladdens them and allots to each his place, serves them Himself and lavishes on them the fullness of all goods.[30]

Dionysius gives finally a brief explanation of God's "sleeping" or "awakening"; this is found in the concluding parts of the letter. Divine sleep signifies in God that which is raised

[29] *Ibid.*, § 4. [30] *Ibid.*, § 5.

above everything and indirectly the things which are governed by providence.[31] His awakening is interpreted as the attention which God's providence gives to those who are in need of education and salvation.[32]

Dionysius devotes a passage in another work to an attempt at clarification of the mode of expression characteristic of " symbolic theology." He proceeds to show that the human mind endeavors to attain an understanding of the invisible by means of the visible also on the level of creatures. One may conceive of the soul after the manner of a corporeal shape and speak of its parts, although it is strictly indivisible. In this manner of speaking, the " parts " must be understood differently from what we mean by the word when we refer to bodies. One may call the power of intellectual cognition the head; opinion, because it stands between reason and unreason, may be called the neck, and so forth. That is, one may employ the names of body parts as symbols for the powers of the soul. It is possible to speak in a similar manner of God's breadth, or length, or depth, thus to indicate His going forth to all things, His power extending over everything, and His being hidden and unknowable to any created being.[33]

2. *The immediate and mediate significance of symbolic names.* An attempt will be made in the following paragraphs to uncover the meaning of " symbolic theology " on the basis of the fragments reported upon above. According to a brief reference in the *Mystical Theology*,[34] the question is about the application of names of sensible things to the divine.[35] We have to examine what these sensible things are, to what their names are applied, in what sense this " transference " of names has to be understood, and finally what kind of relation between the

[31] The manuscript shows in this passage a misprint which makes it difficult to determine the exact meaning of Sister Theresia. However, the rendering given above is presumably correct, because it is in accordance with the passage in Dionysius to which the text refers. R. Allers.

[32] *Ibid.*, § 6. [33] *De div. nom.*, IX, § 5, *P. G.*, III, 913 f.

[34] *Theol. Myst.*, c. III, *P. G.*, III, 1053.

[35] *τίνες ἀπὸ τῶν αἰσθητῶν ἐπὶ τὰ Θεῖα μετωνομίαι.*

things signified immediately and those signified mediately is factually presupposed, on the part of the speaker as well as on that of the listener.

The passage reported above lists a long series of such " transferences ": forms, shapes, parts, tools, places, adornments, passion, grief and anger, drunkenness and titubation, oaths, sleep and wakening. Some of them have appeared in the preceding examples. To one part they are objects of external perception, things and properties of things, as the mixing bowl, the shapes of bread and wine, extension through space, or fire; to another part they are bodily and mental states and processes, like sleep and waking, ebriety, anger, and the like, or social acts such as oaths and curses, and events, as in the case of the wedding feast and other instances mentioned in the Scriptural parables.

Symbolic language, therefore, derives its expressions from the fields of external and internal experience and also from what may be called " experience of life " formed by the concurrence of very diverse elements. The term " sensible things " must be taken in a strict sense. It refers, obviously, to all that which we are accustomed daily to experiencing directly or which appears before our mental eyes whenever its name is mentioned. The names are employed in symbolic language to signify something other than that with which we are acquainted by our daily experience. That to which these names are transferred is called by the Areopagite " the Divine." He uses this name in a very wide sense so that it comprises various meanings. This is evidenced by the use Dionysius makes of this term elsewhere. He not only applies it to God Himself and to everything pertaining to God's being or to the Sacraments instituted by God—the Divine Mysteries—but he also calls " divine " the angels and some men, especially the bishops,[36] and he speaks of " divine joy " in relation to the consecration of monks,[37] and so forth. The term occurs almost on every page. It is one of

[36] E. g. *De Eccles. Hier.* c. V, *P. G.*, III, 505.
[37] *Ibid.*, c. IV, 4, *P. G.*, III, 535.

the expressions for which he has a definite preference and which characterize his style. The examples show furthermore that fire is an image for God Himself, for God's Word, and for the angels. The mixing bowl is a symbol of Divine Providence; food and drink are images for various forms of instruction, respectively of the participation resulting therefrom in Divine Wisdom; they are also the shapes in which the God-Man offers Himself in a hidden manner; in the latter instance the symbol is no longer the spoken name but the visible shapes which are actually present, and they signify not only an intelligible meaning but also a present reality. This last remark, however, deals with the relation between the symbol and that indicated thereby. For the time being the question is about that to which "symbolic theology" attempts to lead us through images gleaned from the world of experience. This goal is in itself manifold and may perhaps be covered best by the name of the "kingdom of God." It has its reason of being and its unifying and dominating center in God Himself. It is the true and ultimate goal with which symbolic theology is concerned. From Him, however, there proceed and penetrate into the created they are "Divine") and thus render "divine" everything world effects which preserve something of His essence (i. e., wherein they are received. All these "emanations" of Divine essence, everything that is alive in creatures and possesses likeness to God and that unites them with God into the unity of the Kingdom of God, all this cannot be grasped by our hands or seen with our bodily eyes any more than God Himself. These "things Divine" must, therefore, be intimated, by means of images taken from the world of natural experience, to humans living in and bound to this world, the only one they know.

3. *The Symbol as Image.* How does such an image-language become possible? Or in other words, what are the factual conditions rendering it possible that this language be spoken and understood? To attain clarity on this point, it is necessary to inquire into the particular sense in which the word "image"

is used in the present context. All the preceding remarks suggest that in this instance, too, no unequivocity is to be expected. It seems best to begin once more with the expressions Dionysius himself uses. He concludes the list of " images " reported above with the succinct summary: " and how many of holily shaped forms of symbolic representations of God there may be." [38]

Concerning the word " image " one has to realize that the relation of image is not necessarily implied in the original meaning. The notion of " throwing together " has assumed different meanings in Greek parlance. Those which come closest to the problems here considered may be comprised under the heading of " mark by which something may be recognized "; in this sense, as a means for recognizing one another, the creed was called by the Christians the " symbol." The term connotes furthermore " characteristic " and, finally, " sign." Other expressions used in this context render us aware that the " symbol " must be considered as an " image." In this regard we are told that we have to do with something "*formed*," that is, formed or shaped by someone after the manner in which an artist shapes his work (this is implied in the expressions τύπος and also πλαστός); that accordingly it is a "*formation*" suitable for sensory apprehension (μόρφωσις), and that it *refers to God* as an *ideal* to its *realization*, or an *image* to the *original*.[39]

The notion of " formation " or the " formed " and " shaped "

[38] *Theol. Myst.* c. III, *P. G.*, III, 1053 f., . . . καὶ ὅσαι ἄλλαι τῆς συμβολικῆς εἰσι θεοτυπίας ἱερόπλαστοι μορφώσεις. Neologisms like θεοτυπία and ἱερόπλαστος belong to peculiarities of the Areopagitic style. Translation of such terms is always difficult and runs the risk of missing the correct meaning. The terms chosen here, however, are an inevitable necessity. τύπος means " prefiguration " in the sense in which it is said that Christ is prefigured in the Old Testament, not as the original, but in the manner of the nonessential by which or in which the essential announces itself.

[39] The German expressions here and elsewhere allow for certain implications indicative of an inner kinship between terms and their significations, which are lost in translation. *Bilden* (to form), *Gebilde* (what is formed, configuration), and *Bild* (image) are linguistically related, as is furthermore *einbilden* (impressing or imprinting a form, also incorporating) and *Urbild*, original. Thus, certain subtle innuendos cannot be perfectly rendered. R. Allers.

also has a twofold signification: one has to think on one hand of that which is presented to us by "theology," that is, the *words* used by the Scriptures when they speak of God and of things divine; on the other hand, of that which is immediately expressed by these words, i. e., the *things* named thereby (as the fire or the mixing bowl) or *events* reported (as in the parables), or *actions* by means of which the Prophets presented in a sensible manner whatever they had to announce; Christ too revealed Divine Truth not only by His words but by His actions, and the Church intimates knowledge by Her liturgical ceremonies.

4. *The image-relation and its presuppositions on the part of the speaking and of the understanding mind.* It would be interesting to inquire into the question of how words are formed so that they place an *image* before our eyes sensibly and at the same time, place it there so that it points beyond itself to something expressed mediately by the words and which the images are meant to represent. This problem, however, is outside the scope of the present article; rather, the attempt must be made to understand the image-relation as it obtains between that immediately and that mediately expressed by the words. When Moses says: "The Lord thy God is a devouring fire, a zealous God," [40] he is in a definite sense the one who forms and shapes, as the "theologian." [41] Like a magician he conjures up before our eyes the image of fire. It is "formed" by him because it is apprehended in a definite manner, viewed under a definite aspect, namely, as "devouring fire." The terms "forming" or "shaping" do not imply, in this context, any arbitrariness. One must rather think that he shaped the image in this particular manner because it so shaped itself "in him." It imposed itself on his mind as an *image of God* because he experienced God in a corresponding manner. There is some similarity between the ineffable he encountered and the "de-

[40] *Deuter.*, IV, 24.

[41] More correctly, though, the Divine Spirit may be called the former, because He leads the theologian, permits him to find the words and images, or even tells or shows them to him.

vouring fire," some factually common trait. In this instance one has to do with an *image-relation* in the proper sense: something sensible, encountered in sensible perception, represents something other in virtue of factually common traits which allow recognition of the latter in the former. The particular fact that the thing represented can never become an object of sensory vision, by principle, does not pertain to the image-relation as such, but to the peculiarities of an image of *God*. The possibility that one can become cognizant of the thing represented by looking at the image, however, pertains to the image as such and therefore also to the image of God.

To shape something into an image one must know the *original*. The theologian (taking this name as always in the Areopagitic sense of one speaking of or announcing God) must know God to shape his images of God. What, then, is the foundation of this presupposed knowledge of God? There are several sources from which a knowledge of God may be drawn: *natural knowledge of God*, faith as the "*ordinary*" *way of supernatural knowledge of God*, and finally a *supernatural experience of God*[42] as the "*extraordinary*" *way* of a supernatural knowledge of God.

(a) *Natural Knowledge of God.* The study of the Areopagitica does not give the impression that the author considered natural knowledge a possible source of his theology.[43] This

[42] Under this name is comprised a diversity of facts.

[43] The question whether or not Dionysius held that a natural knowledge of God is at all possible is very difficult to answer on the basis of this writer's statements. His actual way of proceeding, however, is another thing. Most passages read as if he wanted to exclude natural knowledge as dangerous, to say the least, although he does not seem to consider it altogether impossible. Cf. *Theol. Myst.* I, 2, *P. G.*, III, 999 f.; *De divin. nom.* I, 1, *ibid.*, 585 ff. He distinguishes, in fact, in the ninth letter to Titus (*Ibid.*, 1106 ff.), the "secret and hidden" theology from one he characterizes as "manifest and easy to understand," which latter proceeds by "philosophical demonstration"; but this corresponds to the different procedure adopted in the "Symbolic Theology" on one hand and his treatment of the *spiritual* names of God on the other. Contemporary theology comprises both ways under the heading of "natural theology" (cf. Scheeben, *Dogmatik* vol. I, p. 482). This is in accordance with the doctrine of St. Thomas. It is questionable whether an interpretation in this sense of Dionysius is permissible.

kind of knowledge will be, however, mentioned here as one of the factual possibilities. Natural theology, as the name is used today, refers to a doctrine on God developed from natural experience by natural reason. The nucleus of this doctrine is the proofs for the existence of God and the doctrine of God's nature and properties deduced from our knowledge of the created world. In this, one proceeds by conceptual thought, discursive reasoning based on sensible data, as all such reasoning is. The qualification " sensible " must be taken in a broad sense, as opposed to conceptual thinking which presupposes certain given data. In this sense, the term covers all sensible and spiritual vision, and within the former the vision of things actually present and of things represented.

There must be a primary intuition furnished by the external senses to make scientific thought possible. By this intuitive evidence the external world is presented to the human eye, and hence much more than that which strictly " falls into the senses." Perception always goes, in more than one respect, beyond that which falls then and there into the sense. There is given together with the apprehended material, in a " co-givenness," all that which does not actually fall into the senses presently, but which fundamentally might do so, and the apprehension of which may be attained in the progress of perception; this mode of givenness may be characterized as an " empty intuition " or an intuition of emptiness (*leer-anschaulich*). But many features are given simultaneously which never can fall into the senses or be attained by sensory perception.

In this regard one has to mention first the " inner " structure of and the laws governing the spatio-corporeal nature as such; these aspects mathematical science tries to apprehend by means of its peculiar concepts. To mention just one example: we perceive " causation," although it can never become an object of sensory awareness as such. This view of the world as *effectively-real* [44] is contained in sense perception; it is the presup-

[44] The German text has here *wirkliches*, a term which cannot be translated with exactness. It means, of course, " real," but with an emphasis on the note of bring-

position for all inquiry into causal laws. The scientist follows the lines of inquiry pointed out by such implications and disregards others, equally present. This disregard is fundamental for the scientist's conception of "nature," which is abstract compared with the fullness of the world apprehended by the senses.

In this fullness, the world presents still another "inside" beyond that studied by science. Among the impressions our senses convey one encounters the difference between "animated" and "unanimated" beings.[45] Life and soul are "seen" simultaneously (together with the other sensa) in external perception, but they are never envisioned from without in the strict sense. They are, however, truly experienced "from within." And that which is apprehended together with and as implied in the external world can be brought to cover, as it were, that which we experience within ourselves.

But besides the particular features characteristic of beings endowed with life or soul, more is contained in the plenitude of the sensibly perceived world than can be grasped by the methods of science. This world is "our world," in which we experience love and joy, which we face enthralled or admiring, awed or horrified; it is a meaningful whole which "speaks" to us in a thousand voices, revealing its being as a whole and in every one of its parts, and nonetheless remaining a mystery forever. It is this same world which by all it manifests and conceals points beyond itself to Him Who through it "reveals Himself mysteriously." It is *this* world and its implied indications which point

ing about, causing, etc. as in the verb *wirken*. One might say that the German language expresses a more dynamic view of "reality," which word seems to stress the static aspect. R. Allers.

[45] Biology and psychology when adopting "exact" procedures, i. e., those of mathematical science, apprehend life and soul through their corporeal conditions or manifestations. This is not to the point in the present context. The approach is furnished indeed, in the situation under consideration here, by the body; but this body is not viewed as a "material body" but as "corporeal," in which the presence of life and soul are "visible." The German has the useful distinction between *Körper*, rendered here by "material body," and *Leib* which refers to the body of a living being, primarily of man. R. Allers.

beyond itself that form the intuitable basis for the demonstrations of natural theology. It is also the potentially intuitable basis for the language of images, the recognition of values, and at the same time, the understanding of " symbolic theology." The Psalmist hears the voice of God in nature. He does not, however, know God from this source *only*. Rather, he finds God in all things because he possesses the *faith* and because God's voice speaks in his interior. It cannot be gainsaid, however, that some images may be derived immediately from the intuition of nature. " The Lord's voice soundeth over the waters." [46] It is natural to man that he interpret the growling of thunder as a manifestation of some higher power. The image of " God's voice " accordingly suggests itself and may be safely considered as generally intelligible. The *symbolic language* is, in this instance, an expression of real or assumed knowledge. When such knowledge exists the image achieves more than simply representing something previously know but not actually present and thus bringing about recognition of the thing in its image. The image is conducive towards a knowledge of a thing yet unknown. The " theologian " becomes acquainted with God by means of the image. Then, the image is not the work of the theologian but of God. God has manifested or mirrored Himself in His work and thereby lets Himself be known. The fact that He is not known before and, therefore, cannot be " recognized " does not render meaningless the notion of image as " reproduction." It is indeed possible not only that one recognize the portrait of an acquaintance, but also that one may become acquainted with an unknown person through a good portrait. Also, when looking at the portrait one knows that it is a *portrait* and that it is a *good* portrait. This is an actual possibility, although it is realized only in the case of a spectator who possesses the " sense " for it and also the necessary training of the eye. What we call today a " symbol " is, it would seem, most completely realized when an intuitable form is apprehended as " meaningful image " (*Sinn-Bild*) and the image reveals to us a hitherto unknown meaning.

[46] *Ps.*, XXVIII (XXIX), 3.

Consequently, it is God Who is the first and *original theologian*. His " symbolic theology " is coextensive with the whole creation. The theologians of whom Dionysius speaks, the holy authors, are the men who have an original understanding of this " natural " revelation; they have the gift of understanding the image-language of God and of translating it into human language so as to lead others to God by way of symbolic theology. One may safely assume that they are by nature " chosen vessels," that is, that they possess to an unusual degree the capacity which we call " religious sense." The development of this sense and of such a man's capacity may also be furthered by particularly favorable conditions of natural environment. This, however, must not be taken as tantamount to saying that natural revelation is accessible only to these elect persons. Quite to the contrary, the whole significance of their mission rests on the possibility that others too may find God in this way. This is a necessary condition for the intelligibility of their image-language. Their task consists only in teaching others, so that these may learn how to look through nature when listening to the words of their teachers. (It is well to remember that even sensory perception has to be learned and that it is not learned equally well by everyone.)

Natural knowledge is only one possible basis for the images created by and the understanding of symbolic theology. The natural basis, however, is much broader than the reference to the one example cited suggests. It has been remarked before that images are borrowed not only from external but from internal experience as well. When Moses says, " The Lord is a devouring fire," he elucidates the " external " by an " internal " image. The experience of Divine governance in personal fate as well as in historical events on a large scale is obviously of great importance in the shaping of language used by the Psalmist. Here, and also in the parables, the field of sensory perception is definitely abandoned. The " image " takes on an ideal character which presupposes a spiritual penetration of original experiential data pertaining to a higher spiritual level. A further discussion of these problems must be reserved for a future occasion. It is

indeed impossible to point out, within the narrow frame of an article, the diverse possible ways of natural knowledge of God, to explain their importance for symbolic theology, or to consider their peculiarities and differences. For the present, the indication must suffice that natural knowledge of God appears as an abundant source from which symbolic theology may draw.

(b) *Faith.* One can hardly determine accurately how far the influence of natural knowledge goes and whether it is ever *factually* the only source. Every one of the "theologians," after all, stands firmly on the ground of *faith.* To the authors of the Old Testament, God is first of all the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of their forefathers, Whose feats they have heard recited since their early youth, in the service of Whom they have been educated. "Faith" then assumes in this context the proper meaning of *fides*, of the acceptance and retention of *supernatural revelation*, and is not synonymous with the looser meaning of "belief." By the expression "supernatural revelation" reference is made to the Self-revelation of God through His very words, particularly the revealing of the mysteries of God, hidden in Him and inaccessible to natural knowledge. (What there is in the way of naturally knowable facts in Revelation may be disregarded in the present context.) *God's Word* is *Revelation* of supernatural truth and addressed, at the same time, to *man*, demanding faith as the acceptance and retention of revealed truth. Faith is rightly called *knowledge* insofar as it confers the possession of truth; but it is *dark* knowledge in that the conviction it entails is not founded on insight into the faithfully accepted truth. Using the terms "God's Word" and "address" is not tantamount to saying that supernatural revelation consists always in a definite and immediate speaking of God after the fashion of man. The words of God's messengers, His Prophets and Apostles directed in His name at those who are called to the faith, are also Divine Word and address; this is true, first of all, of the Scriptures. By referring to the holy authors as "faithful" we mean that they led a life of faith before and continued to do so after they had been called. The higher

light they received does not flow steadily, but is a sudden and momentary elevation above the ordinary state, though it leaves behind certain lasting after-effects. We are concerned here only with the fact that faith is in itself, independently of all extraordinary illumination, a possible source of the image-language of symbolic theology. When the poet of the Psalms contemplated the fate of the chosen people, as he knew it from sacred history —the miraculous promises and the leadership of Divine Grace, the ever recurring apostasy of the people and thereafter the terrible judgments and punishments—certain images of God may have suggested themselves so to speak spontaneously, as of God as "Father of orphans,"[47] and faithfully caring shepherd,[48] or on the other hand as the angry judge who "delivers His people up to the killing like sheep"[49] and "arises in glowing wrath."[50] This language could be understood through the intermediary of faith, since the people listening to the Psalms and singing them themselves lived in the same tradition as the holy singer. He but lent words to things alive in the hearts of his audience or aroused others which slept there.

(c) *Supernatural Experience of God.* (1) *Revelation and Inspiration.* Faith, the acceptance of the revealed Word of God, refers back ultimately to something other. God speaks through His messengers; His words to be received as His must be somehow distinct from ordinary human words and those speaking the words must be legitimated as God's messengers. The simple faithful man is satisfied with the legitimation supplied by the Scriptures; it is part of his faith, based on the doctrine of the Church, to feel sure that the Scriptures are God's Word and that the authors of the various books are "inspired," that is, governed by God's Spirit. It is not up to him to examine this inspiration or to ask how this or that word "came to occur in the Scriptures." But there must be some way to ascertain both. The second question concerning the criticism of the Bible may be neglected. We may assume that any definite passage

[47] *Ps.*, LXVII (LXVIII), 6.
[48] *Ps.*, XXII (XXIII).
[49] *Ps.*, XLIII (XLIV), 12.
[50] *Ps.*, LXXVII (LXXVIII), 21, 22.

is genuinely Scriptural. Such a passage is considered as inspired not only by the simple faithful but also by the theologian—in the modern, not in the Dionysian sense. Revelation means that God wants to make known something in the particular text. "Inspired" means that God moved the author to write down this text or, eventually, moved a person to speak the words reported in the text. Is it necessary that the inspired person who becomes the instrument of Divine Revelation know of this fact? Must he be aware of having been accorded an illumination, must he himself have received a revelation? Cases are conceivable in which nothing of this sort occurs; it is not impossible that someone speak words of Revelation without realizing it, without having received a revelation from God, and without himself being carried by God's Spirit in the words he speaks and the way he speaks them; he may believe he expresses nothing but his own opinion in words of his own choosing. Thus Caiphas spoke in the High Council: "Ye do not know any thing and do not consider that it be better for you that one man die for the people and not the whole people perish." [51] And St. John adds: "But he spoke so not of himself but because he was the High Priest of this year, he prophesied that Jesus was to die for the people. . . ." Caiphas, therefore, spoke in the name of God and by Divine ordinance, without knowing or willing it as such. St. John, however, knows that Caiphas spoke God's word. Does he know of the prophetic significance of Caiphas' words by a revelation accorded to him on this particular point? This is quite possible. But it might be also that the fulfillment of these words by the death of Jesus and the contemplation of the whole work of Redemption made St. John realize the prophetic character of this utterance.

Ordinarily, it is surely not the case that a man becomes the instrument of Divine Revelation without his knowing and willing it. It will be helpful to compare the preceding report with the great vision of Isaias.[52] The Prophet sees the Lord sitting on the throne of glory; he speaks to Him from mouth to

[51] *John*, XI, 49 ff. [52] *Is.*, VI.

mouth and receives words he shall pass on to the people. Seeing and hearing must be taken here, it would seem, in a strictly literal sense. The description given by the Prophet is not to be considered as the symbolic rendering of something envisioned in a purely spiritual manner. Thus, here too it is God Who is the " symbolic theologian," Who reveals Himself, the Incomprehensible, in a visible image and by human words. He reveals Himself to the man who stands before Him and charges him with His mission. Isaias is conscious of both Revelation and mission. When he, then, stands before the people, he knows that his message is God's Word in the strict sense of the term. Revelation and inspiration and the consciousness of both appear in this case simultaneously.

The question then arises: what gives to the Prophet the certitude that he is standing before God? Looking with the eyes or the imagination is not an indispensable condition. These traits may be absent, and the inner certitude nonetheless be there that it is God Who speaks. This certitude may be based on the " feeling " that God is present; one feels oneself touched by the Divine Presence in one's innermost being. This is what is called " experience of God " in the strictest sense. It is the nucleus of all mystical experience, encountering of God as of one person by another. A sensible vision may be added to this, as an unessential accompanying phenomenon, as it was in the case of Isaias.

Can one, on the other hand, conceive of such a vision without a true experience of God? It is not impossible that the Prophet see the Lord before him or hear His words without being touched internally by God in a mystical manner. This was obviously the case with the boy Samuel who heard God calling him without realizing that God was calling.[53] He did not recognize God. With Isaias it might have been so that the miraculous character of the vision and the accordance with his knowledge of God by faith of the things seen and heard brought about the conviction of God's presence without an

[53] I *Sam.*, III, 1 f.

inner contact. This interpretation cannot be rejected absolutely as an impossible one; it appears, however, as a rather artificial construction. Of young Samuel we read that he did not yet know the Lord; this seems to suggest that Eli knew the Lord and that Samuel was going to learn to know Him. One gets the strong impression that Samuel knew the Lord after the revelation which was accorded to him; this knowledge came not from discursive reasoning and intellectual consideration but from personal encounter, from having been touched in his innermost, from the experience by which the child awoke to be a Prophet.[54] In such a true experience of receiving a mission, then, inspiration, revelation, and the consciousness thereof are combined with the direct experience of God. Between this fullness of experience and the other extreme of a revelation without the person knowing about it or willing it as a revelation, there exist many intermediary degrees.

To start again from below: inspiration may be present and the person conscious thereof without any revelation being conceded to the inspired mind; the holy author knows that he is moved by the Divine Spirit to say or to write something, also how to express it; he may experience inspiration as such, but what he has to say has no relation to his person; it may be an event of which he knows by experience, or a moral truth into which he has a natural insight. (Such must have been the origin of parts of the books on history or wisdom in the Scriptures.) The opposite, however, that is, revelation without some type of inspiration, is obviously impossible. Whenever God unveils Himself or a hidden truth, it is done through His Spirit, and whenever a man is chosen to transmit to others such a truth, he must be led by God's Spirit. Divine truth may enlighten a mind which neither hears nor sees anything. The choice of the words in which to cast his message may be left to the person. If he receives a revelation by means of audible words

[54] The interpretation submitted here is not claimed to be the only possible one, but to be a possible one. Viewed in this manner, the event reported affords a useful intuitable basis for the thesis to be demonstrated.

or an image is presented to him, it may be that he has only to pass on the image or the words without understanding them himself. But it is also possible that the spiritual meaning is made intelligible to him, be it by an inner illumination or by additional explanatory words.

(*2*) *Personal and Mediate Experience of God.* In all such cases, as referred to above, there is more than mere natural knowledge of God and also something surpassing faith, but it is not necessary that there be always a personal and experiential knowledge of God. It may be questionable whether one is entitled to speak of all such cases as of a knowledge of God. It seems correct to say that any experience is apprehended as coming from God which is experienced as having the character of the supernatural. When Divine Truth appears in the splendor of a " supernatural light," that is, appears as clearly distinct from natural knowledge and as breaking into the latter's context, then the light is understood as " Divine Light." When words are heard or a figure seen, and the one speaking or appearing does not claim to be God Himself but an angel or a saint, he nevertheless comes from God as His messenger. The person receiving the revelation knows that he is subjected to Divine influence, through this messenger or through an " intellectual vision." (This may be asserted also of inspiration, unless it be, perhaps, experienced as of demoniacal origin.) But under the conditions mentioned, man does not stay in face of the Lord, God does not cease to be the hidden God. Isaias, however, envisioned God Himself and heard His words; and if the interpretation given above of the tale is correct, he was sure in his innermost being that God Himself was present. Only when this happens is one entitled to speak of a personal experiential knowledge of God. This " feeling of God's presence " has been called above the nucleus of all mystical experience. It is, however, only the beginning, the lowest degree of the life of mystical prayer. There are many steps and transitions between this stage and the apex of " infused contemplation," the permanent union with God. Each higher stage is a richer and deeper self-

revelation and self-surrender to the soul on the part of God; on the part of the soul, it is a more and more comprehensive penetrating into, and becoming acquainted with God, which demands of the soul an ever more complete surrender. Personal experiential knowledge is characterized by the note of immediacy which is lacking in those revelations in which God does not disclose Himself, but only a single truth or event is revealed which is unattainable by natural knowledge. The difference is about that which obtains between the immediate experience of a thing self-present on one hand and one apprehended only by its effects or rendered present through a messenger on the other. But God is never " immediately intuited " in the same manner as is that which falls into our senses or that which we recognize as true in spiritual insight.

The name of an experience of God applies in the strictest sense only to personal encounter. But the kinds of mediate knowledge referred to before must be counted among the supernatural *experiences* and therefore be distinguished from faith. All kinds of supernatural experience, but particularly personal acquaintance, stand to faith in the same relation as, on the natural level, one's own experience stands to knowledge by report. All kinds of experience are a *fulfilling* of something known hitherto only in thought without proper original apprehension. Personal encounter differs from mediate experiential knowledge by being fulfillment, since the object recognized as self-present provides fulfillment to that which hitherto was known only by mediation or representation. Personal encounter does not yet provide complete fulfillment, but it points beyond itself to a truer fulfillment in mystical experience of a higher degree and, finally, in beatific vision. (The question will not be raised here whether beatific vision still carries some note of non-fulfillment, dependent on the fact that it is not the vision by which God envisions Himself.)

(*3*) *Supernatural Experience of God, Faith, and Natural Knowledge of God.* Compared with the natural knowledge of God, faith possesses the characteristic of fulfillment, though not

in the way personal experience fulfills what is merely known; the relation is rather like that obtaining between what is clearly known as set over against something only " guessed " darkly (that is, if we understand by natural knowledge of God His appearing together with or in simple natural experience, so to speak His co-appearance, as of a higher power, and not yet natural theology). One may also speak of a material enrichment of knowledge, insofar as faith furnishes us with new information above that gathered from natural experience and natural theology; finally one may refer to the confirmation by a higher authority of things known previously. The transition from natural to supernatural knowledge of God can be compared, on the other hand, to making the personal acquaintance of a man whose existence was realized before only by means of certain effects and, eventually, concluded on the basis thereof. Faith may furnish a bridge for this transition. We may also think of this transition from natural to supernatural knowledge of God as happening without the mediation by faith, that is, as a gift of Grace bestowed on a person previously void of faith; if this experience is " accepted," then the diverse kinds of fulfillment will coexist in this experience so that the whole event will present to a much higher degree the character of an inner revolution and transformation.

All kinds of knowledge of God are coordinated with one another by the intentions in virtue of which they point beyond themselves, and they are lastly ordained towards the experience of God. This is not tantamount to saying that natural knowledge of God and faith presuppose supernatural experience as a precedent in time; nor that they actually find their legitimation therein; but that there is implied in their proper nature an aiming at this experience and the possibility that they may be rediscovered in a transformed state within this new mode of knowledge.

(4) *Signification of Supernatural Experience for Symbolic Theology.* The notion of a supernatural knowledge of God has to be clarified to ascertain what it may achieve for " symbolic

theology" (i. e., in the Areopagitic sense, as image-language about God). Inspiration, "non-personal" revelation, and visions may, in comparison with the natural knowledge of God and faith, point out new images and, at the same time, give the certainty that these images are "adequate." [55] The things the prophet sees and hears form, as it were, the higher teaching of symbolic theology; images and words are put at the disposal of the holy author and enable him to speak the ineffable and to make visible the invisible. But still more important is the inner contact of God without word or image. In this personal encounter the mind becomes intimately acquainted with God and thus is rendered able to "shape the image according to the original." On the basis of this experience, images and words may suggest themselves which are apt to represent God as one came to know Him. This intimate knowledge also furnishes to the theologian a standard of appraisal or a correct "feeling" when he consciously elaborates this presentation and searches for suitable words and images.

The question must be raised once more of what the conditions are for the understanding of such an image-language which is drawn from ultimate sources. The answer is that he will have the *most proper* understanding who already possesses such an experiential knowledge of God. He alone has the possibility of recognizing in the "portraits" God, with Whom he is personally acquainted. But faith too, and even natural knowledge, supply a basis for a certain understanding. One who knows and loves God by and in living faith will be anxious to know Him from ever new sides and in ever new "traits"; he will, therefore, turn always to the Scriptures for information. Here too some kind of recognition takes place. The faithful mind has already an "image of God" and integrates it with the new images by which he finds that God is presented. This enables him to add new traits to his image; he discovers these traits in the old images. (In these statements the term "image" is used

[55] "Adequate" is an imperfect rendering of the German *treffend* which is, in fact, covered by the colloquialism "hit the mark." R. Allers.

in diverse senses. By " my image of God " no duality is introduced of image and that represented thereby, but the image means God as I know and understand Him.) The terrain of faith is not abandoned in this process; there is a progress within faith, clearly distinguishable from a purely natural and rational apprehension of the literal sense, but different also from the experiential knowledge of God. An unbeliever does not become acquainted with *God* by reading the Scriptures, say in the attitude of a student of linguistics or religious history; he only comes to know the way the Scriptures and those who believe in them think of God,[56] unless it be that by such reading faith is awakened in him; but in this case a transition occurs from the one to the other attitude. There are different modes of understanding and of becoming acquainted within faith itself. A believing reader of the Scriptures accepts all he reads " in faith," that is as revealed truth, but this does not necessarily entail that his soul apprehends everything in a living manner. The apprehension may be to a large extent empty and void of influence on experience and remain limited to a merely literal understanding.[57] One becomes sharply aware of this difference when one sees suddenly a Scriptural text in a " new light " by which one is shown either something in God hitherto unknown to one or one's own soul; it may happen also that a reader is struck in a personal manner by a Divine demand he did not realize before, or a doctrinal truth which had been known as separated from another may appear as closely interrelated. All this is possible " in the light of faith." Our knowledge of God is thereby enriched, our relation to God deepened or ordered in a better way, but we do not stand, nonetheless, before God's face. This too may happen; a word in the Scriptures may strike a person in his innermost being so as to make him feel that God Himself addresses him and he may thus become aware of God's presence. The book or the holy author or the preacher to whom I happen to listen

[56] This applies to those who deny the existence of God and also to those who believe in God but not in a revealed " Word of God."

[57] This difference is not the same as the theological distinction between " living " and " dead " faith, which refers to the possession or the loss of the state of grace.

disappears—*God Himself speaks*, and He speaks to *me*. The terrain of faith is not properly abandoned, but I am raised for one moment above it to an experiential knowledge of God.

All theology has, ultimately, but one task: to make the way free to God Himself. The Areopagite has stated this explicitly as the goal of his " symbolic theology." It addresses itself to a chosen circle and aims to achieve more than mere instruction on the content of faith; it addresses those who have already experienced a certain illumination and therefore strive for sanctity. Symbolic theology tries to lead such persons by unveiling to them a suprasensible world in the images; it tries to detach them more and more from the sensible world and desires to lead them to a point where they will have no need any longer of such images. " Symbolic theology " attempts to " lead them by the hand," [58] first away from the sensible to the spiritual and suprasensible, and finally to the highest apex, the union with the One. It is not for theology to bring about this last step; this is God's own doing. Theology can only lead in this direction.

Experiential knowledge has been called before the " fulfillment of faith." Thereby it is indicated that faith aims at the same state which is actually given in experiential knowledge. This is a general character of " intention " and " fulfillment." When I see with my own eyes something of which I knew only by hearsay—e. g., a famous work of art or a beautiful old town—then that which I actually behold as existent belonged already to my mental world. Through reports heard or read the thing had reached me in a certain manner and I was touched by it internally. In such a happening, fulfillment receives its significance. This is true in an even higher degree of faith. We look at the Scriptures as " God's Word," because He there approaches us, reveals Himself and makes known His demands. As long as I look at the Scriptures in mere faith only, they are but the word spoken " in His name." But even this mediated word can bring me into a connection with Him and make me feel

[58] *Hier. Cael.*, c. I; § 2, *P. G.*, III, 121.

internally touched. This feature of faith by which it transcends itself—St. Thomas calls it " the beginning of life everlasting in us " [59]—brings it about that we may " recognize God " when He suddenly makes us feel His presence, or even shows Himself in a visible manner, and also renders us able to understand what others have said regarding their own experiences of God, though we have no such experience ourselves.

The same considerations apply, to a certain extent, also to the natural knowledge of God. If a man grew up without instruction in the faith, but is receptive for God's traces in nature, in his own interior, and in human life, he may feel his faults as " sins " and a loss he suffers as a " Divine punishment." He can understand easily when it is said of God that He breaks out in wrath and that He is a devouring fire. However imperfect and indefinite natural knowledge of God may be, however much it may be in need of correction and enrichment through faith, there is nevertheless implied in it a direction towards and an aiming at that which becomes real in experiential knowledge of God. Some kind of encountering God takes place even on the level of natural knowledge, and this then makes possible " recognition " when it happens that He stands before such a man.

Thus, it seems as if there were a great number of people capable, at least fundamentally, of understanding the image-language of symbolic theology. What then is the meaning of the statement that this theology " hides the holy before the desecrating eyes of the multitude "? [60] Are there any persons left to whom symbolic theology is unintelligible? Such people exist, indubitably; the Scriptures are exposed today not less than in the time of Dionysius to the crude misunderstanding of the images to which he refers. And even if there is no false interpretation there may still prevail a total lack of understanding. There are several reasons for this fact.

As has been remarked above, " our world points beyond itself " in many ways, and thus leads the mind to transcend the boundaries of this world; but these " hints " are not such that

[59] *Q. disp. de ver.* q. 13, a. 2, c. [60] V. sup. p. 388.

they might not be overlooked, nor are they so unequivocal that they would lead unfailingly to the goal. Natural disposition and teaching on the part of the environment play here a decisive role, as they do in many similar situations. A man lacking " practical sense " is unable to see " what a thing is good for " and how to handle it. If he is not well trained he will forever walk through this world in a somewhat hazy and helpless state of mind. There is also sometimes a defect of " religious sense," and it is quite possible that a man remain blind to the " hints " by which the world points to God, unless this defect is remedied by a good education.[61] To some the Scriptures remain a sealed book as long as the reader is not assisted by some special grace. He stops at the immediate and literal sense and is unable to look through the images. He does not know how to account for the *maior dissimilitudo* and develops a poor or undignified idea of God, or even becomes an atheist if he feels that such an idea is repulsive. He may also, eventually, reject not God but the Scriptural testimonies.

It is questionable whether one can claim that lack of faith, a total ignorance of God, can exist without personal guilt and, therefore, that some may be inaccessible to the image-language of the Scriptures. If such a case could exist, one cannot deny *all* human guilt. We may disregard here original sin and the opacity of the mind caused by it. But no man grows up in absolute separation from others; and then it is " society " which is responsble when it fails to furnish the testimony which might have opened the eyes of this person. In most cases, however, the " unbeliever " is responsible himself too for his blindness.

[61] The doctrine of the Church is that the human mind is *able* to attain a knowledge of God by its natural powers. But it is not said that everyone *will* arrive at such a knowledge under all conditions. If St. Paul declares (*Rom.*, I, 20) that there is no excuse for the pagans since God may be known from creation, one has to think of the *total* pagan world in which helpful factors assuredly never were missing, not however of the individuals taken singly. The Apostle, furthermore, considered them guilty because they did not proceed to the right veneration of God, in spite of an actually existing knowledge of Him (*Rom.*, I, 21). However, the blindness of an individual man may also stem from personal guilt. (On this point v. inf.)

Nobody can live under such conditions that no testimony whatsoever of God would reach him. If he refuses it entrance into his mind and does not, at least, take some pains in following up the views he comes to know, it is his own guilt; if at a later time there results a total incapacity of knowledge, if a factual non-recognition is superseded by an inability to recognize, all these effects are ultimately his own doing. This is, obviously, even more the case when there is not only actual lack of faith but definite atheism by principle, or hostility against God. It is not within the scope of this article to inquire into the causes of such an attitude. But an understanding must be reached of the fact that "symbolic theology" may, eventually, succeed in hiding God rather than in revealing Him. It is easy to see that the eyes of guileless unbelievers are unable to pierce the veil. Such a man, however, is not one of those who *ought* not to see. It seems rather in accordance with the meaning of "theology" that he should be taught how to see. Some people fail to obtain a knowledge of God because of laziness and dullness of mind; in such instances the inability to see may be considered as a state of punishment. It is even more easy to understand that those malignant minds be struck with blindness which *refuse* to believe but read the Scriptures with the intention of using their very words as weapons against revealed truth.[62]

The attempt has been made to show that in all true knowledge of God, it is God Himself Who accedes to man, although His presence is not actually felt in all cases; this happens only in experiential knowledge. In natural knowledge, God approaches man through images, words, and manifold effects; in faith, by way of self-manifestation in the Word. Whenever there is a

[62] There is a passage indicating that Dionysius may actually have thought on such lines. In the seventh letter, addressed to Polycarpus (§ 2, *P. G.*, III, 1079 f.) he answers the sophist Apollophanes who had criticized him for using against Greek philosophy its very doctrines. Dionysius reproaches the Greek for trying to use Divine wisdom against God. The particular instance, however, to which Dionysius refers can hardly be interpreted as a misuse of the Scriptures. The remark has in any case a wider significance. It throws some light on the fights about God raging in this age, when pagan and Christian writers alternatively grasped the weapons of their respective antagonists.

question of knowing a person, there is not only the possibility of self-manifestation but also its opposite, the possibility of barring the approach to knowledge, furthermore the possibility of withdrawing behind one's work. This work, then, still has significance, has a real meaning, but it no longer gives free approach to the person, no longer mediates the contact of one spirit with another. God will let Himself be found by those who seek Him. Therefore, He first wants to be sought. Thus it becomes understandable that natural revelation is not inescapably clear and unequivocal, but an instigation towards further search; supernatural revelation gives the answers to questions aroused by natural revelation. Faith is already finding God and means that He lets Himself be found to a certain extent. And this not only in the sense that God allows us to be told something about Him through His Word, but also that He lets Himself be found through it. Faith is a gift that should be accepted. In faith Divine and human freedom meet. But faith is a gift of such a nature that it calls for asking for more. As a dark knowledge lacking true insight faith awakens the longing for unveiled clarity; as a mediated encounter it arouses the desire for immediately encountering God; the very content of faith arouses this desire by the promise of beatific vision. One may also understand, on the other hand, that God withdraws from those who do not comply with the call for further search, who remain unmoved and in dullness of spirit in face of His self-manifestations or do not seek therein Him but means to serve their own ends, eventually even against Him. To him who does not accept God's word as the word of *God* it turns into a dead word. No longer does it point beyond itself, in a live manner, at the context wherefrom it stems, that is, the realm of the Divine Spirit. The heathens may find a confirmation of their idolatry in some of the images, the dialecticians discover contradictions between different passages; the educators and moralists be scandalized by many things, because their minds remain obtusely ignorant of the hidden meaning.

(*5*) *Degrees of Veiledness and of Unveiling*. The "hidden sense" may be more or less hidden. As has been pointed out

before, Dionysius comprises very diverse things under the name " symbol ": visible images of the invisible which, however, stand to the latter in a true image-relation (as the " devouring fire ") ; other images in which the relation is not directly intuitable but may be established by thoughtful comparison and discovered by reasoned reflection (such a relation is, e. g., that of the mixing bowl to Divine Providence) . To the last named class one would apply today the name of allegory rather than that of symbol. Other examples have been mentioned in which the symbols had no longer any sensible character. This is the case with the parables. Jesus Himself adds to the parable of the sower the explanation because His disciples asked for it.[63] Before He had closed his tale with the words: " Who hath ears to hear shall hear." These words indicate that the true meaning does not lie on the surface, and it is not given to everyone to find it. When hearing this parable the listener has first to realize clearly the meaning of the tale. This demands an intense comprehending activity of the mind. But he must recognize moreover that this whole configuration of intellectual content points beyond itself in a definite direction; he must disengage from the tale a " typus "—in the sense of a general form—which then has to serve as a directing rule so that the mind may be rendered capable of shaping behind the first a new intellectual configuration in which the same form occurs again, but loaded now with the meaning-content the teller originally intended to convey. Not many are capable of such discovery and re-creation when they have to do with comparisons and parables made up by men. How much less, however good the intention, when it is God Who speaks. Not even the disciples were able to do so, although " it was given to them to understand the mysteries of the heavens." [64] The Lord had to open up to them the secret meaning. In a similar manner He taught, at a later time, the two disciples on the way to Emmaus [65] how to understand the messianic predictions of the Prophets and their bearing upon His Passion and Glorification. After the sending of the

[63] *Matt.*, XIII, 3 ff.
[64] *Matt.*, XIII, 11.
[65] *Luke*, XXIV, 25 ff.

Holy Ghost the Apostles became able themselves to achieve the work of exegesis.

The diversity of symbolic relations is mentioned here, though but briefly, to indicate that there are different degrees and modes of hiddenness. To these correspond different degrees and modes of symbolic knowledge. The most general approach is furnished in the image-relation proper. The parables submit the Divine truth as in a closed casket. In many instances it falls to man to seek the key. Sometimes the key is supplied in the form of an additional explanation or of an inner illumination. It may also happen that a sort of " office of the key " is conferred on individuals or groups which have received the gift of Scriptural exegesis. This viewpoint makes possible an understanding of the Areopagitic " hierarchies." God reveals Himself first of all to the pure spirits whose natural capacity of understanding is greater than ours and in whom the Divine Light does not encounter any inner obstacles. It is the office given to these Spirits to transmit the light they receive, and their office is taken over and continued by the " Ecclesiastical Hierarchy " in the degrees of the human order, the members of this hierarchy being called to an angel-like life and service.[66] It is their duty to receive with a purified mind the Divine mysteries and to take charge of them. This also entails preaching and interpreting the Divine Word. Corresponding to the different modes and degrees of hiddenness there are different modes and degrees of unveiling, degrees of office and of difference in the extent to which a person is forbidden or allowed approach.

[66] Dionysius emphasizes on one hand that revelation is accorded to us through the angels (*Hier. Cael.* IV, 4, *P. G.*, III, 181 ff.), on the other hand that Christ is the head of both hierarchies and gives to both to share in the Divine life according to their natures. The angels participate therein in a purely spiritual manner, men by way of the sacerdotal office and the symbols of liturgy (*Eccles. Hier.* c. I, 1 ff., *P. G.*, III, 369 ff.). The office of the angels as mediators recedes therewith into the background. The highest degrees of the hierarchy are said to receive the " holy gift " from God Himself, and no mention is made of the angels as mediators (*Ibid.*, 5, *P. G.*, III, 375 f.).

Concluding Remarks: *Symbolic Theology and Other Theologies*

The diversity of symbols constitutes a series of degrees already within symbolic theology. This is repeated in the other " theologies " which Dionysius distinguishes from the former. The " spiritual names of God " (the Good, the Being, the One, etc.) are not open to understanding even in their immediate significance. They appeal therefore only to a circle of chosen minds. Further inquiry is needed to find out in what relation these names stand to God and how He may be known by means of them. It seems possible to show that one no longer has to do here with the mere relation of sign or reproduction, but still with a " mysterious revelation." [67] This " positive theology " therefore needs to be complemented and corrected by a " negative theology." In both something will be found of that by which all knowledge about God becomes precisely knowledge of God, namely the personal encounter with God. When this encounter finally becomes a person's proper experience, no longer mediated by images and parables, nor by ideas, nor by anything which may be given a name, then only is reached the level of " mysterious revelation " in the strict sense, the " mystical theology," the self-revelation of God in silence. This is the summit, the height of which is approached by the degrees of the knowledge of God.

Thus it may be stated once more: God Himself is the *First Theologian*. All speaking *about* God presupposes *God's* speaking. His most real speaking is that in the face of which human speech is silenced, that which no human words can comprehend nor the language of image express. It amounts to a seizure of him to whom this speaking of God is addressed and it demands personal surrender as the condition of hearing it. Such a seizure is usually associated with the vocation as a " theologian." God wants to speak to the people who stay in the plains through

[67] This seems to agree with the opinion of Dionysius, though he distinguishes this theology as the " manifest " from symbolic theology as the " secret." *P. G.*, III, 1106.

those to whom He speaks on the summit of the mountain. Therefore He condescends to speak to them and through them, but also without their mediation, in human words and in images man can understand. He gives to His theologians the words and the images by which they are enabled to speak of Him to others. To these others He Himself speaks as a " symbolic theologian," through nature, through man's inner experiences, and through His vestiges in human life and in the history of the world, by this means rendering the people capable of understanding the language of the theologians.

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The foregoing discussion presents a set of problems in a first survey as it results when one tries to proceed with a minimum of theological presuppositions. A further elucidation of the notion of " God as the First Theologian," in terms of theology, would have to start from the truest instance of God's speaking, that is, the speaking of the Divine Word. The Word Made Flesh would then have to be considered as the first symbol.

SISTER THERESIA BENEDICTA A CRUCE, O. C. D.

Convent of the Discalced Carmelite Sisters,
Echt, Limburg, Holland

RUDOLF ALLERS, *Translator.*

Catholic University of America,
Washington, D. C.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST

BY JOHN OF ST. THOMAS

Translated from the Latin by

JAMES M. EGAN, O.P. and WALTER D. HUGHES, O.P.

CHAPTER VII *

The Number of the Gifts

1. There is no doubt that there are seven Gifts except perhaps for those who, denying any formal distinction, number the Gifts among the virtues.

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* OUTLINE OF CHAPTER VII

The Number of the Gifts

I. THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST
   - A. In the opinion of some theologians (1)
   - B. In Tradition (2)

II. THE EXPLANATION OF THE NUMBER OF THE GIFTS (3)
   - A. The sufficiency of that number (4)
   - B. St. Thomas' appropriation of each Gift to its corresponding virtue
     1. The Gifts and the Cardinal Virtues (5)
     2. The Gifts and the Theological Virtues (6)
     3. A difficulty arising from St. Thomas' doctrine on the Gift of Understanding (7)
     4. Reply to this difficulty (8, 9 and 10)

III. OBJECTIONS AGAINST THE ENUMERATION OF SEVEN GIFTS (11)
   - A. The opinion that there are fewer, expressed in three objections (12)
   - B. The opinion that there are more, expressed in six objections (13)

IV. THE REASONS WHY THERE ARE NOT FEWER THAN SEVEN GIFTS
   - A. Reply to the first objection (14)
   - B. Reply to the second objection (15, 16 and 17)
   - C. Reply to the third objection (18)

V. THE REASONS WHY THERE ARE NOT MORE THAN SEVEN GIFTS
   - A. Solution of the first objection (19)
     1) Confirmation from Scripture and Tradition (20)
     2) Confirmation from reason (21)

These same authors are not disconcerted by the fact that Isaias enumerates seven Gifts, because they maintain that later he adds faith and justice—*And justice shall be the girdle of his loins and faith the girdle of his reins.*[1] For them, then, Isaias has enumerated more than seven Gifts.

This opinion is not completely repudiated by Lorca,[2] since he thinks that it can be defended. However, he admits that the opposite opinion is more common and should be held because of the authority of the Fathers and theologians, among whom seven Gifts are commonly enumerated.

2. The enumeration of seven Gifts is so well established in the tradition of the Church that no probability is left to the opposite opinion. For what probability can there be in an opinion which is opposed to the unanimous agreement of the holy Fathers, the common acceptation of theologians, and the practice of the Church? For the Church seems to have approved this doctrine by chanting in praise of the Holy Ghost: "Thou art sevenfold in gifts,"[3] and again, "Give to your faithful confiding in you the sacred sevenfold."[4] The Fathers considered this as a determined and certain number, and not a figure or universal number. They agree on this because Sacred Scripture specifically mentions the Gifts by name, which is a sign that it is treating of them as determined and certain. For Isaias enumerates these seven Gifts by their proper names. He notes first *And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him*[5]—the spirit in general. Then he divides the spirit specifically and calls each by its name: *the spirit of wisdom and of under-*

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a) Resumption of objection from this solution (22)
b) Answer to resumption (23)

B. Solution of the second objection (24)

C. Solution of the third objection (25)

D. Solution of the fourth objection (26 and 27)

E. Solution of the fifth objection (28)

F. Solution of the sixth objection (29)

[1] *Isaias*, xi, 5.

[2] *Commentaria in I-II*, q. 68, d. 25, n. 4. Alcala, 1609.

[3] *Veni Creator* from Terce on Pentecost. Cf. *Hymns of the Dominican Missal and Breviary*, Aquinas Byrnes, O.P. Herder, 1943. Pp. 138, 144.

[4] *Sequence of the Mass of Pentecost.*

[5] *Isaias*, xi, 2.

standing, the spirit of knowledge and counsel.[6] Hence Tertullian[7] in his explanation of this passage teaches that, "The spirit of the Lord will rest upon Him, and next he enumerates its species, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, etc." Whenever Scripture uses a number and names the species enumerated, that number is generally taken as determined and definite. Such is the common testimony of the Fathers, among whom are: Jerome,[8] Gregory,[9] Augustine,[10] Ambrose,[11] Cyprian,[12] Bernard,[13] Tertullian,[14] Origen.[15] All the theologians and the common opinion of the faithful follow this tradition. Hence this opinion is more than probable while its opposite is more than improbable.

No merely natural reason can be given for this number, since it is derived from revelation alone. It must be explained and defended by Scripture and the Tradition of the Church; it cannot be demonstrated.

3. Two things must be considered in explaining the number of the Gifts. First, in examining the argument of St. Thomas, some reason must be given why this number seven is sufficient at least according to some proportion and analogy. Secondly, an inquiry must be made as to whether these seven Gifts are indivisible species or merely subordinate genera which can contain further species and hence, in an absolute sense, would constitute more than seven Gifts.

4. St. Thomas has proved[16] that seven Gifts are sufficient. These Gifts can perfect all the powers of the soul which are ordained to obey and to be moved by the divine impulse, namely, reason and the appetitive faculty.

[6] *Ibid.*, xi, 3.

[7] *Contra Marcionem*, c. VIII. *PL*, ii, 489.

[8] *In Isaias* XI. *PL*, xxiv, 144.

[9] *I Moralium*, c. 12 (alias 28), *PL*, lxxv, 544. *Homilia XIX in Ezechiel*, *PL*, lxxi, 1153.

[10] *Sermo XVII de Sanctis*, *PL*, xxxix, 1525. *II De Doctrina Christiana*, c. 7, *PL*, xxxiv, 39. *I De Sermone Domini*, c. 4, *PL*, xxxiv, 1234; c. 9, *PL*, xxxiv, 1239.

[11] *I De Spiritu Sancto*, c. 20, *PL*, xvi, 740. *In Psalmum 118*, *PL*, xv, 1207.

[12] *I ad Quirinum*, c. 11, *PL*, iv, 685.

[13] *Sermo L in Canticum Canticorum*, *PL*, clxxxiii, 1020. *Sermo II de Annuntiatione*, *PL*, clxxxiii, 590.

[14] *Contra Judaeos*, c. 1, *PL*, ii, 623.

[15] *Homilia VI in Numeros*, *PG*, xii, 668a. *Homilia II in Isaias*, *PG*, xiii, 227.

[16] I-II, q. 68, a. 4.

Reason is speculative and practical, and both parts are perfected by two Gifts. No more are necessary. For both parts have a two-fold operation, to apprehend or to find truth and to judge analytically about that truth. The speculative part is perfected in the discovery of truth through the Gift of Understanding. Its judgment is perfected through the Gift of Wisdom. The practical intellect is perfected in the discovery of truth through the Gift of Counsel, and in judgment through the Gift of Knowledge.

The appetitive faculty is perfected in three respects. First, through the Gift of Piety it is perfected in its relationships with others—proper to justice in the will. Moreover, the double personal relationship of the sensitive appetite is ennobled. First, Fortitude perfects a person in matters related to the irascible appetite. Secondly, fulfilling a need for a new element to perfect the habits in the concupiscible appetite, the Gift of Fear restrains the soul from all delight in harmful pleasure—*pierce my flesh with your fear.*[17]

5. This excellent compilation of St. Thomas, embracing all the rational powers perfectible by the divine impulse, indicates the acts of all the intellectual and cardinal moral virtues with their corresponding Gifts. For example, there are four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance, to which correspond the four Gifts: counsel, piety, fortitude and fear, inasmuch as it has a secondary act of repressing delights. The intellectual virtues are the habit of principles — called understanding, wisdom, and knowledge. To these correspond the Gifts of Understanding, Wisdom, and Knowledge.

Two virtues perfect the practical part of the intellect. In moral matters there is prudence, which is perfected through the Gift of Counsel. In artistic matters (external works) there is art, for which, according to St. Thomas,[18] there is no corresponding Gift of the Holy Ghost. For the Gifts perfect a man so that he may be docile to the Holy Ghost in matters which pertain to right living and the preparation of his soul for the attainment of eternal life. External works of art do not belong to the motion of the Holy Ghost, since the Holy Ghost does not move men with a supernatural gift and special impulse to such things as making clothes or building houses. He moves them only to tend towards eternal

[17] *Psalm* cxviii, 120. [18] I-II, q. 68, a. 4, ad 1.

life. In a word, the arts are concerned with works of the natural order and there is no such thing as a supernatural work of art. Consequently, there is no supernatural virtue of art. Since the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are supernatural, no Gift corresponds to art, nor is the action of art an action of the Holy Ghost.

6. The Gifts presuppose all three of the theological virtues as their root and foundation, since it is through them that the soul is united to God and able to be moved by His Spirit. But in a special way the Gifts of Understanding and Knowledge correspond to Faith so that revealed mysteries can be rightly apprehended and judged. Fear—in so far as it restrains presumption—is conjoined to Hope, while Wisdom is linked with Charity, since from the savor and taste of love the soul experiences and enjoys loving knowledge. Therefore, from every point of view these seven Gifts are sufficient.

7. Objection: The only difficulty with this collation of Virtues and Gifts arises from the fact that St. Thomas asserts that the Gifts of Understanding and Wisdom perfect the speculative part of the intellect, while Counsel and Knowledge perfect the practical part. But Understanding and Wisdom are also practical, just as is Faith, to which they correspond. For Faith is at the same time speculative and practical because it works through Charity. Furthermore, the Gift of Knowledge is concerned with both speculation and action, since it judges of things to be done and even the scientific analysis of truths in themselves. St. Thomas recognized this [19] and he retracted his earlier opinion that Understanding was not practical.[20] He did the same [21] about the Gift of Knowledge. Since, therefore, St. Thomas has retracted this present teaching upon which is founded his proof for the conclusion about the number of Gifts, the whole compilation topples and has been fabricated in vain.

8. Response: It is true that St. Thomas does modify his former statement and he admits that the Gifts of Understanding, Knowledge, and Wisdom are found in both the speculative and practical intellect. A defense might be instituted upon the grounds that in the collation of St. Thomas just given Understanding and Wisdom,

[19] II-II, q. 8, a. 3 and 6.
[20] I-II, q. 68, a. 4.
[21] II-II, q. 9, a. 3.

although both speculative and practical, are more eminently attributable to the speculative part. The Gift of Knowledge, which proceeds through lesser causes than those of Wisdom, and the Gift of Counsel are more eminently practical, although they too are speculative. Although this defense is not without foundation, it is not necessary. St. Thomas [22] has clearly shown that "To some it seems that the Gift of Understanding differs from the Gifts of Knowledge and Counsel by the fact that these latter belong to practical knowledge, while the Gift of Understanding belongs to speculative knowledge. It differs from the Gift of Wisdom, which also belongs to speculative knowledge, because Wisdom is concerned with judgment, while Understanding renders the mind apt to grasp the things that are proposed, and to penetrate into their very core. In this sense we have assigned the number of the Gifts.[23] But if we consider the matter carefully, the Gift of Understanding is concerned not only with speculative but also with practical matters, as stated above.[24] Moreover, the Gift of Knowledge is concerned with both matters, as we shall show further on,[25] and consequently we must make our distinction in some other way." When St. Thomas mentions that some think this way, he implies that in his enumeration of the Gifts [26] he wrote according to a common opinion, not according to his own. He wished to reserve his own for further discussion in a more suitable place.

9. The definitive doctrine of St. Thomas, then, affirms that three Gifts belong to the appetitive power: Piety, Fortitude, and Fear. It is likewise quite clear that because of its concern with action the Gift of Counsel belongs to the practical intellect and that it corresponds to the virtue of Prudence. On the other hand, the Gifts of Understanding, Wisdom, and Knowledge, which embrace both the speculative and the practical, should not find their total adequation in their correspondence with the virtues. Some of these virtues perfect the speculative part and others the practical, since their limited formalities can include only one or the other function of the intellect. No one acquired virtue can, at the same time, perfect the intellectual potency under both aspects. Supernatural virtues, however, are so elevated that they can embrace

[22] II-II, q. 8, a. 6.
[23] I-II, q. 68, a. 4.
[24] *Ibid.*, a. 3.
[25] II-II, q. 9, a. 4.
[26] I-II, q. 8, a. 4.

both. For example, Faith, like the Beatific Vision, is at once speculative and practical. In it there is not so much a question of its limitation to a subject which it perfects as of the participation in the Divine Science which it represents and whose place it takes. Thus Faith includes both functions of the intellect.

For this reason, the truer and more formal reason for the distinction of the Gifts is to be sought, not in their relation to the intellectual virtues and their limitations in the speculative or practical intellect, but in the correspondence between the Gifts and Faith and their imitation of it.

10. It is in this way, therefore, that St. Thomas proves the sufficiency of the intellectual Gifts,[27] since these Gifts are ordered to supernatural knowledge which is had through Faith. Faith is primarily concerned with the First Truth, the Divine Truth. Secondarily, it considers certain things related to creatures. Finally, it directs human actions to which it extends, since it works through Charity. For a man must be properly disposed in order to have a correct attitude toward the things which are proposed to him for belief. He should be able to grasp and apprehend correctly the things that are proposed. Moreover, he should be able to judge well, knowing what to take and what to cast aside. The Gift of Understanding renders him capable of apprehending these truths. The judgment of them belongs either to Wisdom, if it is a matter of judging through the highest causes, or to Knowledge, if lesser causes are concerned. Action and the direction of human life is the peculiar function of the Gift of Counsel.

11. Many difficulties arise from this discussion and correlation of the intellectual and the appetitive Gifts. They will have as their object to prove that fewer Gifts would be sufficient, or that there are actually more Gifts than those mentioned.

12. The first difficulty seeks to prove that there are fewer Gifts by the statement that all the functions of judgment concerning supernatural objects can be fulfilled by one and the same habit or principle. There is no reason, then, why all supernatural things cannot belong to the one habit, especially one so elevated and perfect as a Gift.

The second difficulty is somewhat similar. Faith by itself includes

[27] II-II, q. 8, a. 6.

all supernatural objects. It can extend to both the speculative and the practical functions of the intellect, just as can the Gifts. Therefore, according to its superior and eminent motive principle, one and the same Gift can extend to the judgment of all supernatural things.

Finally, there is no reason why the same habit cannot, at the same time, both apprehend and judge truth, since one act ordered to another can be included under the same formality.

13. Other objections try to show that there are more than seven Gifts. The first urges that although only seven Gifts are enumerated, it is nowhere asserted that these seven are ultimate species. They might be subalternate genera. For example, there are said to be four cardinal virtues. Yet under these there are subjective parts or species. Under justice there are the species, called "commutative," "distributive," and "legal." Under this same virtue there are the potential parts: religion, piety, dutifulness, appreciativeness, and the like. Prudence contains the species called regnative, domestic, and military, while the potential virtues annexed to it are eubulia, synesis, and gnome.[28] Why can not there be contained under the Gifts many species of Piety, Counsel, and so forth? Or else why do the Gifts contain all these functions under one specification rather than under diverse specifications?

Second, there are many intellectual virtues under wisdom and knowledge. Why cannot there be many intellectual Gifts under Wisdom and Knowledge? Why is there no Gift corresponding to art?

Third, there are Gifts corresponding to the intellectual and moral virtues. Why are there no Gifts corresponding to the theological virtues?

Fourth, the Gifts are enumerated and ordered in pairs. The one regulated is placed with the one regulating, as wisdom and understanding, since wisdom regulates understanding. Science and piety are together, counsel and fortitude. Why is there no Gift regulative of fear?

Fifth, even if Isaias enumerates seven Gifts he adds two others a little later: *and justice shall be the girdle of his loins and faith the girdle of his reins.*[29] Finally, St. Paul enumerates several other

[28] Cf. I-II, q. 57, a. 6.

[29] *Isaias*, xi, 5.

Gifts: *Now there are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit,*[30] and *To one through the Spirit is given the utterance of wisdom; and to another the utterance of knowledge, according to the same Spirit; to another faith, in the same Spirit, to another the gift of healing, in the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy*, etc.[31] Why are not all these listed among the Gifts of the Holy Ghost?

Why There Are Not Fewer Than Seven Gifts

14. Passing over the possibility of all the offices of judgment being accomplished by one habit which would be of an order and essence different from that of the Gifts, it must be unequivocally denied that there is any one habit of the same order as the Gifts which can do it. Whatever the possibilities may be about there being a habit so elevated that it can fulfill all these functions, there is actually no one habit that can do it all. Scripture assigns the task to a plurality of Gifts and not to one. Since Scripture asserts that the Gifts are actually more than one, no further proof is needed. Only the convenience of this fact is subject to inquiry. For through Faith the very existence of these Gifts is made known, even though a plurality of Gifts is more reasonable because of human capacity and limitation, to which grace adapts itself as far as possible. Consequently St. Thomas need not prove this plurality. Presupposing then the number of Gifts as established in the Scriptures, St. Thomas inquires into the convenience and the proportion of that number. His discussion and his reasons intend to prove no more than that.

15. In reply to the second objection it must be noted that there is a proportion between the relationship the Gifts bear to their objects and the relationship of Faith to its object. One may be of greater material extension than another, for Faith attains to very many things, and the Gift of Wisdom is related to far more than the Gift of Counsel, which is limited to human actions. Yet in their essence or in their manner of operation they are distinct. Faith can no more perform the functions of the Gifts of Wisdom and Understanding than they could accomplish those of Faith. Each operates within its own sphere. Faith believes in God revealing

[30] *I Corinthians*, xii, 4. [31] *Ibid.*, xii, 8.

without involving itself in inquiry or judgment concerning matters of Faith. It performs no operation other than that of believing, although it may be concerned with more objects than some of the Gifts and fewer than others. The Gift of Wisdom judges these same matters, but it does not exercise any function of believing. The Gift of Understanding grasps and penetrates the things of Faith, but it is not directly concerned with belief. Each of the Gifts taken separately extends to many objects but not to the exercise of the function of any other Gift, or at least not in the same way as another Gift.

16. For the moment any consideration of the sufficiency the act of Faith has for all its objects, according to its own manner of acting and not according to the judgment and intimate penetration of the terms by the Gifts, must be omitted. But without hesitation it can be denied that Faith is sufficient for all objects according to its own mode as well as the mode of the Gifts. It is the same with the Gifts: each is sufficient for its object according to its own manner of acting but not according to the formality of any other Gift or Virtue. The distinction of the Gifts, however, is not based solely upon the material objects to which they extend. Rather it is founded upon the formality and manner of acting of the Gift in relation to these objects. Moreover, Faith does not extend to all the objects of the Gifts, nor does it perform all their acts. Each performs its own function. Therefore, the argument that, like one Faith, one Gift should be sufficient, is without foundation. Faith does not suffice for all these operations but only for believing. Other virtues are required for judging and apprehending.

17. Why should not one Faith or one Gift suffice for all these functions? The answer lies in the specific limitation of each virtue. For example, one science is not sufficient to perform the operations of all the sciences, nor is one sensitive potency sufficient to fulfill the duties of all the senses, since each has its specific limitation.

Could there possibly be one habit, whether a virtue or a Gift, which, absolutely considered, could exercise all these functions under a more elevated formality? This is possible, but it is not in conformity with human limitation and capacity, to which it is convenient to operate through more limited forms. Moreover, as a matter of fact, no such Gift is to be found. Upon what ground may it be asserted that there is no such Gift? Scripture gives the

answer—by revealing that these Gifts are distinct, just as it reveals that the three theological virtues are distinct: *There remain these three Faith, Hope, and Charity.*[32]

18. In solving the third difficulty it must be noted that one habit or one virtue concerned with a hierarchy of things does suffice for apprehending and judging all under the same formality of judgment. Yet for apprehensions and judgments under diverse formalities one habit or virtue does not suffice. The Gift of Wisdom is ordained to judging under a formality different from that of Understanding. The former judges in an analytic fashion, since it proceeds from the highest causes. The latter employs merely a simple, apprehensive judgment, just as does the habit of principles. This does not mean, however, that the Gift of Understanding merely apprehends and does not judge. It implies only that it does not judge in the analytic manner of Wisdom and Knowledge.

Why There Are Not More Than Seven Gifts

An Inquiry Into the Question of Whether the Gifts Are Ultimate Species

19. Solution of the first difficulty: There can be no doubt that the Gifts are ultimate species, although they are of a higher essence than the moral virtues. Even though one ultimate species of such Gifts is the equivalent of many virtues, formally there are but seven of these species, ultimate and indivisible.

St. Thomas makes this point in writing of the Gift of Piety,[33] but the doctrine may be applied to the other Gifts. "Piety in one and the same way directs all intercourse with others, receiving, however, a norm other than that of the virtues. Because that norm is simple and one, Piety is one spiritual habit. And by comparison with this norm all its acts are specified." If Piety had only the unity of a subalternate genus, it could not direct all social intercourse in one and the same way. For example, the virtue of justice does not direct all relationships with others in one and the same way. It directs in one way by commutative justice, in another by distributive, and in still another by religion and respectfulness. Absolutely considered, then, justice directs in different ways. All these things, therefore, indicate that the Gifts are ultimate species.

[32] *I Corinthians*, xiii, 13. [33] *III Sent.*, d. 34, q. 3, a. 2, quaestiunc. 2.

20. This doctrine is more in conformity with Scripture and the Tradition of the Church, which enumerates seven Gifts and no more. If under each Gift there were other gifts as ultimate species, absolutely speaking, there would be more than seven Gifts. For example, absolutely speaking, it cannot be said that there are only four moral virtues, but that there are four cardinal virtues. Hence, if there were more than seven Gifts, the number seven could not be used in an absolute sense. Furthermore, if there are other lesser species of Gifts, some mention should be made of what they are and how many there are. For nothing should be asserted concerning these Gifts other than what is given through revelation. But no more than seven Gifts are ever mentioned. Therefore, it is not legitimate to make assertions concerning the Gifts which Faith does not explain or which the Tradition of the Church does not imply.

21. Reason confirms this doctrine. In each Gift the formal motives and causes are those of one ultimate species. Therefore, the Gifts themselves are ultimate species, being specified by such motives. The inference is evident, since things specified cannot exceed whatever specifies them. Consequently, if their formal causes are not subalternate genera but ultimate species, the Gifts themselves must be ultimate and indivisible species. Since the Gifts act with a higher motive within either of the intellectual or moral genera of virtues they can embrace and unite in an eminent fashion what is divided among the various motives of the virtues. Therefore, the motives and formal causes of the Gifts are less divisible than those of the virtues. For a motive which proceeds in a higher way and embraces many inferior causes is not divided into as many species as the lesser causes, otherwise it would not proceed in so unified a fashion. For example, the power of the sun, being more eminent, is divided into fewer species than the powers of the elements; the knowledge of higher Angels is contained in fewer representative species than that of lesser Angels. Likewise, the architectonic arts and sciences are not divided as much as the ministerial and lesser arts and sciences are. Moreover, that a higher principle embraces more in its unity and is divided less than an inferior motive is proved from the fact that in one genus, temperance or justice for example, the virtues are divided into several species. For in a different way or according to a different rule,

reason measures what is related to commutative justice and what is related to distributive justice, or the things related to God or to one's neighbor. On the other hand, the Gift of Piety, which measures according to a divine rule and the impulse of the Holy Ghost, can embrace all in one architectonic rule of action, since it is concerned with God as a Father and all men as brothers in grace. It pays all debts under the communication of that supernatural notion of grace, which is one. It subordinates to itself all social intercourse of the natural order. Fear, likewise, under the formality of restraining the soul and fleeing from the evil of sin, restricts all illicit delectation and subdues the excess of harmful elation. Yet this is the function of the virtue of Temperance under the many diverse measurings of reason and its own intrinsic goodness.

22. It may be alleged that this same situation obtains in the infused moral virtues. Their motive in the supernatural order is higher than that of the correlative virtues in the natural order. Yet there are as many of them as there are acquired virtues. Hence, it does not follow that because the motive of the Gifts is higher there are fewer of them than there are virtues.

23. The answer to this difficulty is based upon the fact that the case of the infused virtues is essentially different from that of the Gifts. The infused virtues are elevated above the acquired virtues by reason of their object and the substance of their acts, not because of a special mode of being regulated or moved. The infused virtues and the acquired virtues are proportionately the same. The infused virtues are concerned with a supernatural end and because of this they are more elevated than the acquired virtues. But even in the infused virtues the rule of action and manner of measuring actions in relation to its proper objects and end is according to infused prudence, which regulates according to the ordinary rules and manner of understanding, inferred by the human process of reasoning. From this knowledge of these objects through Faith, Prudence elicits acts according to its proper limitation. This is evident in theological conclusions and practical and prudential rules. Even in supernatural matters, Prudence acts according to limits and capacity of reason. Hence, it is not extraordinary that such virtues, even though supernatural and infused, should not be fewer in number than the acquired virtues. Although they are elevated above the virtues of the natural order in the matter and objects

with which they deal, in their manner of regulating and measuring and knowing they are not so elevated that they operate more unifiedly, more indivisibly, and more eminently than the acquired virtues.

On the other hand, the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are concerned with a knowledge and regulative principle higher than human powers can attain even with infused virtues. The Gifts have as their norm the impulse and motion of the Holy Ghost. Consequently, they function in a more unified and eminent way than the infused virtues, since they are measured by a higher rule. Therefore, they should not be divided and multiplied like the virtues. Rather they should be contained in a lesser number of habits and should unite each genus of virtue in an indivisible way. Their motive is higher, their formal cause is more elevated, and they even proceed in a higher way.

24. The reply to the second difficulty is based upon the foregoing. The Gifts are not multiplied in the same way as natural science because they function according to a higher and more simple cause. They are, then, more unified and less divisible than the natural sciences.

The difficulty concerning art is dispatched by noting that there is no Gift of art because there are no supernatural works of art. All supernatural things belong to right living as ordained to eternal life. This is beyond the function of art.

25. Reply to the third objection: As has been noted above,[34] some Gifts correspond to the theological virtues. They are not superior to them but serve them and prepare the object matter for the virtue. The theological virtues unite the soul to the ultimate end, and are the foundation and root of the Gifts by which the Holy Ghost moves the soul to tend toward that end. Consequently, the Gifts presuppose Faith, Hope, and Charity, uniting the soul to its end. Thus all the Gifts are related to these virtues as to a root.[35] Moreover, in a special way, the Gifts of Understanding and Knowledge are related to Faith, Fear to Hope, and Wisdom to Charity.[36] In all, however, the Gifts are not superior to these virtues but their servants.

[34] Cf. Chapter 3, no. 55.
[35] Cf. I-II, q. 68, a. 4, ad. 3.
[36] Cf. respectively I-II, q. 8, 9, 19, and 45.

26. The reply to the fourth objection is based upon the twofold principle of St. Thomas. First,[37] Fear implies a retreat from evil. Yet the same habit directs a motion toward its term and away from its beginning. The same Gifts, then, which direct the soul in its approach toward God through Hope, Charity, Piety, etc., direct the soul in the retreat from evil by the Gift of Fear. Hence, Fear needs no other directive principle. Secondly,[38] Fear is directed by Wisdom because the Divine Excellence, the principle subject of Wisdom, is the special reason for fearing God. Fear itself prepares for Wisdom, since the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the Lord.[39] Consequently, Fear is a disposition to Wisdom, by which it is regulated and measured.

27. It is not inconvenient for the Gift of Understanding to be directed and regulated through Wisdom, because the latter perfects man's intellect and directs his love. It reflects upon the principles which are known by the habit of understanding.

28. Reply to the fifth objection: The two habits enumerated by Isaias after the seven spirits are not called spirits. Consequently, they cannot be included among the spirits which make the soul readily movable by the Holy Ghost. Isaias does not assert that the spirit of justice and the spirit of Faith will be the girdle of his loins. He merely notes that justice and Faith will be the girdle of his loins. This is a sign that they do not belong to the group of seven, but that they are virtues which pertain to the administration of the reign of the Messias. For He was to rule in justice and fidelity (faith here means fidelity, not the theological virtue of Faith). According to the Hebrew[40] this passage refers not to virtues but to faithful men who will approach and gird the Messias.

29. Reply to the sixth difficulty: St. Paul, according to the common opinion, was enumerating the charisms. These are not common to all men, nor need they be found in all who are in the state of grace. They may even be found in sinners, since they are given for the edification of others and not for the salvation of the one possessing them. *To one through the Spirit is given the utter-*

[37] Cf. *III Sent.*, d. 34, q. 1, a. 2, ad 3.
[38] Cf. I-II, q. 68, a. 4, ad 5.
[39] Cf. *Psalm* cx, 10 and *Ecclesiaticus* ii, 16.
[40] Cf. Oleaster: *Commentarium in Pentateuchum Moysi, in loco.*

ance of wisdom, to another knowledge, etc.[41] They are not given to all, but some to one, others to another.

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost, however, are found in all the just, since they have as their end the preparation of the soul to be easily moved by the Holy Ghost toward eternal life. *Thy spirit lead me into the right land.*[42] Yet the sevenfold Spirit found in Christ—*The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him: the spirit of wisdom and of understanding*, etc.[43] — would remain not with sinners but with the just: *The Holy Spirit of discipline will flee from the deceitful . . . and shall not abide when iniquity comes in.*[44]

[41] *I Corinthians*, xii, 8.
[42] *Psalm* clxii, 10.
[43] *Isaias*, xi, 2.
[44] *Wisdom*, 1: 5

CHAPTER VIII *

The Properties of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost

1. There are three properties of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost. The first is the connection of the Gifts among themselves and their

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* OUTLINE OF CHAPTER VIII

The Properties of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost (1)

I. The First Property: The Interrelation of the Gifts and their Correlation with Charity
- A. The mutual relation of the Gifts like that of the moral virtues (2)
  - 1) The correspondence between the habits themselves not their acts (3)
  - 2) The relation of the Gifts to Charity as analogous to that of the moral virtues and Prudence (4)
- B. The difficulties involved in the Thomistic doctrine
  - 1) The first difficulty (5)
    - a) The first confirmation (6)
    - b) The second confirmation (7)
  - 2) The second difficulty (8)
  - 3) The opinion of Father Lorca (9)
- C. The solution of these difficulties
  - 1) The Thomistic doctrine involved in the first difficulty
    - a) From the authority of Scripture (10)
    - b) From the authority of the Fathers (11)
    - c) From the authority and reasons of St. Thomas (12 and 13)
  - 2) The solution of the first difficulty (14)
    - a) The refutation of the first confirmation (15)
    - b) The refutation of the second confirmation (16 and 17)
    - c) The appraisal of the opinion of Father Lorca
    - d) The clarification of the notion of keenness in the Gift of Understanding (19)
  - 3) The answer to the second difficulty
    - a) The Gifts and Faith (20 and 21)
    - b) The Gifts and Charity (22)

II. The Second Property: The Permanence of the Gifts
- A. The formal aspect (23)
- B. The material aspect (24)
  - 1) Objections against the Thomistic doctrine
    - a) The first objection (25)
    - b) The second and third objections (26)
  - 2) The answers to these objections
    - a) The answer to the first objection (27)

association with Charity and grace, which is so intimate that the Gifts never exist apart from grace. The second property is their duration throughout this life and eternity. The third property is their equality and inequality among themselves and in relation to the virtues. These properties are common to the Gifts and the virtues. The moral virtues have in addition the property called moderation, since either their excess or deficiency is measurable by reason. On the other hand, the Gifts of the Holy Ghost do not involve any determined rule of moderation. They are united immediately to God Himself and follow His impulse.

The Connection of the Gifts Among Themselves and With Charity

2. St. Thomas[1] proves the mutual relation of the Gifts in the same manner in which he establishes the connection among the moral virtues. All the moral virtues are correlated by the single virtue of Prudence regulating them. Moreover, Prudence itself cannot be had without an intention of the end rectified by the other virtues. In this same way, the Gifts of the Holy Ghost are connected through Charity which is had only by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Yet the Holy Ghost cannot dwell in the soul unless it is first made docile to Him and obedient in all things. *For whoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*[2]

3. This interrelation of habits does not refer to their acts but to the habits themselves. For it is not necessary for anyone who exercises one virtue to perform acts of the other virtues at the same time. However, he must be prepared to perform the acts of

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b) The answer to the second objection (28)
c) The answer to the third objection (29)

III. The Third Property: The Relative Superiority and Inferiority of the Gifts (30)
A. The Gifts and the theological virtues (31)
B. The Gifts and the intellectual and moral virtues (32)
C. The hierarchy within the Gifts (33)
1) The Gifts in the intellect (34)
2) The Gifts in the appetites (35)
3) The position of the Gifts according to their material aspect (36)
4) A difficulty on the place of the Gift of Fear (37)
a) The Thomistic solution (38)

[1] I-II, q. 68, a. 4. [2] *Romans*, viii, 14.

the other virtues should the occasion arise. For example, a person may feel the obligation of performing an act of justice or religion and at the same time he may be lax in the matter of chastity and unprepared to preserve it in temptation. Evidently if he were faced with the absolute necessity of preserving chastity to preserve the virtue of justice, he would prefer to violate justice rather than preserve chastity. Obviously, then, his attitude toward the observance of justice is neither firm nor virtuous.

This same principle applies to the Gifts. Their mutual relationship is not necessarily found in their acts but rather in the habits themselves. For example, a man prepared by union with God through the theological virtues to follow His impulse and motion toward his ultimate end, should be prepared to follow the divine motion in all things that are conducive to the attainment of that end. Likewise, anyone prepared by Understanding to follow the Holy Ghost in matters related to Faith and not prepared to follow Him in matters of Piety, Fortitude, or Fear, is not sufficiently disposed to follow the Holy Ghost toward eternal life. He cannot say with the prophet: *I am prepared to follow your commandments and I am not disturbed.*[3]

4. Once it is admitted that the Gifts are rooted in Charity and connected through it — just as the moral virtues are connected through Prudence — no difficulties arise, except those similar to the objections concerning the moral virtues. For without Prudence there is no true moral virtue, since the regulative principle of morality is absent. And when Prudence is present none of the others is lacking, since they establish the right intention necessary for the judgment and command of Prudence. In the absence of Charity no Gift can be found to move the soul towards eternal life. When Charity is present none of the Gifts is lacking. For Charity cannot remain without the movement of the soul toward eternal life through the motion of the Holy Ghost.

5. Objection: The primary difficulty is in the presupposition that the Gifts are united in Charity, and that Charity is united with them in such a way that one cannot be had without the other. The basis of this difficulty lies in the difference between the virtues and the Gifts, which are necessary for operations surpassing the

[3] *Psalm* cxviii, 60.

common and ordinary actions of the virtues, extraordinary acts which need a special motion and impulse of the Holy Ghost. Such actions, however, are not necessary for Charity or for the attainment of eternal glory, since anyone can be saved through a simple observance of the commandments. Even martyrdom, detachment from the things of the world and other works not of precept but of counsel are not required for the possession of Charity. Much less necessary, then, are the extraordinary actions found in only a few, like the fortitude of Samson or other martyrs who by an impulse of the Holy Ghost surrendered to death. Therefore, since the Gifts are for extraordinary actions, while the virtues without the Gifts suffice for common actions under Charity, there seems to be no necessary connection between the Gifts and Charity.

6. The objection is confirmed by the fact that in many who are not in the state of grace, and even among those who have not the Faith, there are to be found many extraordinary actions. They perform great feats of fortitude and piety. They are proficient in counsel and in many other admirable and extraordinary works of virtue. And all of these they perform without the Gifts. Hence these extraordinary acts do not postulate Gifts rooted in Charity.

7. Further confirmation is provided by the possibility of salvation for those who have Charity but lack some of these Gifts. Hence, the Gifts are not connected among themselves nor with Charity; nor are they necessary for salvation. The argument seems forceful enough, since there cannot be a necessary connection between things which can be separated. For example, many men who are in the state of grace are simple and unlettered. They lack the Gifts of Understanding, Wisdom and Knowledge. In fact, they are filled with the opposed vices of dullness, roughness and puerility. Hence, St. Augustine admits: [4] "Many of the faithful lack knowledge though they have faith." Likewise, without these Gifts in their perfection many of the faithful are saved. According to St. Augustine,[5] "There are those whom not the vigor of understanding but the simplicity of believing makes most safe." Hence, without the vigor of understanding proper to the Gift of Understanding many of the faithful are saved. Faith, with Prudence and the other virtues, is sufficient.

[4] *XIV de Trinitate*, c. 1, *PL*, xlii, 1037; cf. II-II, q. 9, a. 1.
[5] *Contra Epistolam Fundamenti*, c. 4, *PL*, xlii, 175.

8. The second difficulty: Since Faith can exist in sinners, the Gifts which serve Faith can also exist there. For anything serving a virtue can remain as long as the virtue remains. This is especially true of Gifts perfecting the intellect: Understanding in the perception of truth, Wisdom and Knowledge in its judgment. Of their very nature antecedent to Charity in the will, just as Faith, these Gifts which perfect the intellect and serve Faith can precede Charity and can be found without it.

It does not suffice to reply that the Gifts are ordained to Absolute Good and unite the soul to God and hence cannot be had in a sinner. For even Faith is ordered to the Absolute Good. It is the directive principle of Charity and good works, for Faith works through love. Yet Faith is found in sinners. Therefore, Gifts too can be found in sinners, although of their very nature they are directive of good works and tend to eternal life. However, they may fail to attain that end because of defects on the part of the one operating through them.

Finally, there is the argument that many sinners without grace can understand, dispute, and judge in mystical and affective theology. They can know and teach truths of Faith as if they were in the state of grace. Consequently, if while in Charity they understood these things through the Gift of Understanding and Wisdom, then in acting in the same way even after the loss of grace, they must still understand through the Gifts.

9. On the basis of these objections, Father Lorca[6] denies both assertions of St. Thomas. He denies that the Gifts are connected with Charity in such a way that they are not found in sinners, and he denies that the Gifts are necessary for salvation.

10. Yet, just the opposite of all these conclusions must be held on the authority of Scripture and the Saints, whose testimony easily overcomes and solves these difficulties.

It is certain from Scripture that a particular kind of understanding, wisdom, knowledge, counsel, as well as other Gifts, can be found only in those in the state of grace. For of Understanding it is said, *a good understanding to all who do it,*[7] *give me understanding and I shall live,*[8] *give me understanding and I will learn*

[6] *Commentaria* in q. 68, d. 25, no. 4.
[7] *Psalm* cx, 10. [8] *Psalm* cxviii, 144.

thy commandments[9] Moreover, *Wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sins.*[10] This refers to created wisdom, not to uncreated wisdom, since (the Holy Ghost) *will withdraw himself from thoughts that are without understanding, and he shall not abide when iniquity comes in . . .*,[11] *And because they had not wisdom, they perished through their folly.*[12] When that wisdom fails, a man is no longer in grace. *For God loves none but him that dwells with wisdom,*[13] and no one dwells with the uncreated wisdom unless he has wisdom within himself making him wise and beloved of God. That Wisdom *gave him knowledge of the holy things.*[14] There is, then, a knowledge found only in the saints, which is called a Gift. Moreover, *Thy justifications are my counsels.*[15] Therefore, the Gift of Counsel is never separated from justification.

Piety is profitable in all respects, since it has the promise of the present life as well as of that which is to come.[16] This can be had only through grace.

Fortitude is mentioned in the words of the Psalmist, *Act manfully and let your heart be strengthened, you who hope in the Lord,*[17] and elsewhere, *Strength and beauty are her clothing and she shall laugh in the latter day,*[18] and *if we endure, we shall also reign with him.*[19]

Finally, *Fear of the Lord drives out sin, for he that is without fear cannot be justified,*[20] and *The fear of the Lord is holy, enduring for ever and ever.*[21]

11. From these citations and others like them, it is certainly safe to conclude that there are gifts which are found only in those having grace. Moreover, these words of Sacred Scripture refer to the seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost. For Isaias, in mentioning the Gifts all together, attributes them to the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, Who is found only in the just: *And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him. The Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,*

[9] *Psalm* cxviii, 73.
[10] *Wisdom*, i, 4.
[11] *Ibid.*, i, 5.
[12] *Baruch*, iii, 28.
[13] *Wisdom*, viii, 28.
[14] *Wisdom*, x, 10.
[15] *Psalm* cxviii, 24.
[16] *I Timothy*, iv, 8.
[17] *Psalm* xxx, 25.
[18] *Proverbs*, xxxi, 25.
[19] *II Timothy*, ii, 12.
[20] *Ecclesiasticus*, i, 27.
[21] *Psalm* xviii, 10.

etc.[22] Therefore, wherever the Spirit does not rest, there is no spirit of wisdom or of understanding, *For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee from the deceitful . . . and he shall not abide when iniquity comes in.*[23] Therefore, the Gifts are coeval with grace, for they are possessed only through the indwelling of the Spirit. The Fathers of the Church concur in this doctrine, especially St. Gregory.[24] He teaches,[25] "We have heard that the heavenly kingdom will be opened to us through the sevenfold grace which Isaias enumerated. . . ." Moreover, according to St. Jerome,[26] "We understand that these Gifts were in Christ, because without Christ no one can be wise or understand, nor can he give good counsel, nor be strong, nor pious, nor filled with the fear of the Lord." The same notion is found in St. Cyril's commentary on this part of Isaias.[27] Writing of the anointing of the Holy Ghost, the author of the work on the Cardinal Works of Christ[28] affirms that the Gifts are had through grace: "through this anointing, wisdom and understanding are given us by God, counsel and fortitude come down from heaven, knowledge, piety and fear are poured forth by inspirations from above." Extensive confirmation of this doctrine can also be found among the other Fathers.

12.[29] St. Thomas[30] gives the reason underlying this doctrine. Just as the moral virtues are related to the rule of reason, so the Gifts are related to the Holy Ghost moving the soul. Since the Holy Ghost dwells in the soul through Charity, the Gifts are connected through Charity.

However, to some this would seem to be a faulty reasoning process, since it wanders from the notion of the Spirit moving to that of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. For although the Holy Ghost dwells in the soul only through Charity, He moves it even before Charity is present. This is evident from the fact that, ac-

[22] *Isaias*, xi, 1.
[23] *Wisdom*, i, 5.
[24] *I Moralium*, c. 12, *PL*, lxxv, 544, and c. 32, *PL*, lxxv, 547.
[25] *Homily XIX on Ezechiel*, *PL*, lxxvi, 1153.
[26] *Commentary on Isaias*, c. 11, *PL*, xxiv, 144.
[27] *Lib. II on Isaias*, *PL*, lxx, 310.
[28] Ernaldus, *De Cardinalibus Christi Operibus*, *PL*, clxxxix, 1653.
[29] At this point the Vives Edition is in error on the numbering of paragraphs. The proper numbering is here preserved.
[30] I-II, q. 68, a. 5.

cording to the Council of Trent,[31] a sinner has attrition before he is justified. How, then, can St. Thomas conclude that the Holy Ghost should be dwelling in the soul from the relation of the Gifts to the Holy Ghost moving the soul?

The answer to this difficulty lies in the fact that the Holy Doctor is not referring to the Holy Ghost as moving merely in the efficient order. In that order it is not necessary that the Holy Ghost dwell in the soul, since He is moving toward justification and preparing for His own indwelling. St. Thomas refers rather to the regulative and directive moving of the Holy Ghost, analogous to the movement and regulation of the moral virtues by Prudence. St. Thomas himself makes the comparison: [32] "Just as the virtues are related to the rule of reason, so the Gifts are related to the moving of the Holy Ghost." It is evident that if Prudence moves the soul by directing and governing it, it dwells within the heart and mind. Therefore, if the Holy Ghost directs and regulates in the same manner, He must dwell within the soul and rectify the man, for neither the command of the Holy Ghost nor the actions flowing from it can be defective. Therefore, the similarity of the directive and regulative motion of the Holy Ghost and the motion of Prudence is the irrefragible basis for St. Thomas' conclusion on the indwelling of the Holy Ghost.

13. The efficacy of St. Thomas' conclusion on the necessity of the Gifts for salvation [33] is now more evident. The formation of the virtues according to the human manner of reasoning is not sufficient. There must be superadded a motion and impulse of the Holy Ghost leading the soul to eternal life. Consequently, a Gift of the Holy Ghost is necessary to attain the supernatural end.

Father Lorca thinks he weakens this conclusion by stating that according to this all the Gifts are not needed, just as it is not necessary that the soul be moved by the Holy Ghost in every way possible. Hence, all the Gifts are not necessary for salvation. This seems to him especially evident, since, if a man is moved to judge of divine things by the Gift of Wisdom, why should he be moved by the Gift of Knowledge to judge of the same things.

St. Thomas, it may be noted in reply, at first draws an indefinite conclusion, namely, that a Gift of the Holy Ghost is necessary to

[31] *Council of Trent*, session 14, c. 2. Cf. Denzinger, 898.
[32] I-II, q. 68, a. 5.. [33] *Ibid.*, a. 2.

attain the end. There must be some Gift directing and regulating in a way superior to that of the virtues. It must remove the defects which the virtues are powerless to overcome. St. Thomas need not specify that all the Gifts are necessary. He leaves that virtually manifest. In relation to a supernatural end a man cannot be sufficiently perfected through the virtues and motions of reason. He must have a superior motion and impulse of the Holy Ghost.[34] But the theological and moral virtues cannot be perfected by only one Gift. All seven of the Gifts which correspond to the virtues and serve them are necessary. Since, then, all the virtues necessary for salvation cannot be perfected without these Gifts, all the Gifts are necessary for salvation.

14. Reply to the first objection: St. Thomas teaches[35] that the Gifts are not required merely for works which of their very nature exceed the common perfection of the virtues, as the counsels surpass the precepts. Rather, they are required for a manner of action which is according to a superior principle. This has been noted above in the distinction made between the actions which are special and extraordinary by reason of their object and those which are extraordinary by reason of their subject.[36] Those objectively extraordinary treat of matters not of precept but of counsel, not commonly required for salvation. Subjectively extraordinary actions are such either because of the imperfection of the person or because it is impossible for him to conquer all the difficulties he meets in the attainment of his end.

The Gifts of the Holy Ghost are not given merely to move a man in works which are difficult of themselves, but also those which are difficult in the second way as well. Since the Gifts embrace both aspects of action, they are said to be necessary for salvation, not merely for extraordinary works but for a special manner of acting. Otherwise, because of man's weakness reason would fail to lead him to his ultimate end. But the Spirit is good, and will lead men to the right land.

15. It may be admitted, in reply to the first confirmation, that those who lack grace perform unusual and marvelous actions which are ordained to particular ends. That these actions be ordered to

[34] *Ibid.*, a. 2, ad 2.
[35] *Ibid.*, ad 1.
[36] Chapter II, no. 37.

the full and perfect attainment of the ultimate supernatural end is impossible, unless the Holy Ghost should lift the soul from its infirmity. For not those who do wonderful works but those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. Furthermore, men do not even know how to pray as they ought, but the Spirit Himself must pray for men with ineffable groaning.

16. The basic principle of the second confirmation can be denied without hesitation. The proof fails because many simple and uneducated persons in the state of grace, who know nothing of worldly knowledge, know all that is necessary for salvation, for *His anointing teaches you concerning all things*,[37] and *the Holy Spirit will teach you all truth*.[38] Furthermore, the teaching of many matters of acquired knowledge also pertains to the direction of the Spirit: *The foolish things of the world has God chosen to put to shame the wise, and the weak things of the world has God chosen to shame the strong. . . .*[39] Acquired knowledge puffs up, but Charity builds well. The removal of that knowledge belongs to the Holy Ghost, who also gives to souls the knowledge of the saints, leading them through the right ways. This is the Gift of Knowledge which is lacking to none of the saints.

17. Moreover, St. Augustine[40] is referring to the charisms which may be common to sinners and the just. For the charism of knowledge is ordered to the defense of the Faith and the instruction of others. It does not require that a person be in the state of grace. Loving knowledge, experiencing, as it were, the things of salvation, is not its end. Such knowledge is the function of the Gift. According to St. Thomas,[41] who follows St. Augustine, it is evident that "it is one thing to know how much a man should believe to attain the blessed life which is eternal (this is the knowledge in the Gift). It is quite another to know how to use this to aid the faithful and to defend the Faith against those without it. This latter, then, seems to be what the Apostle means by the term Knowledge." This knowledge is either a charism or theology.

18. Father Lorca objects that St. Thomas understood this passage from St. Augustine to apply not to a charism but to the Gift

[37] *I John*, ii, 27.
[38] *John*, xvi, 13.
[39] *I Corinthians*, i, 27.
[40] *XIV de Trinitate*, c. 1. *PL*, xlii, 1037.
[41] Cf. II-II, q. 9, a. 1, ad 2.

of Knowledge.[42] But Lorca has not pondered the words that St. Thomas has cited from St. Augustine. In the first argument St. Thomas[43] affirms that "through knowledge salutary faith is born, nourished, and strengthened. But Faith is of divine things, so too, then, is knowledge." St. Thomas bows to the authority of St. Augustine and asserts that the Gift of Knowledge is concerned with the temporal element in Faith, not with the eternal. St. Thomas, therefore, admits only that St. Augustine is referring to the Gift of Knowledge as it generates, nourishes, and strengthens faith in the soul. This is not related to the instruction of others but to one's own perfection, which is within the scope of the Gift of Knowledge. For this reason he can infer that the Gift is one thing and that "it is another thing to know how to aid the faithful and defend the Faith against those who do not have it." Yet even here St. Augustine is referring to the Gift of Knowledge rather than to the charism which the Apostle mentions, just as he himself makes clear.

19. But one part of that first objection remains to be answered. It has been alleged that Understanding—necessary for salvation—is given to sharpen the mind, and yet even without this keenness many are safe in the simplicity of their belief. It must be admitted, of course, that many are safe without alacrity of understanding in argumentation and explanation. Yet without the loving and experimental alacrity of the motion of the Holy Ghost, which is derived from the simplicity of Faith either actual or habitual, no one can be safe in the simplicity of his soul nor in unfeigned charity. This latter alacrity is the Gift of Knowledge, the science of the saints, without which *they have neither known nor understood: they walk on in darkness.*[44]

20. Moreover, the Gifts of Understanding, Knowledge and Wisdom are ordained to perfect, consummate, and formed Faith. They are not ordered to unformed or imperfect Faith. Of course, to apprehend truth imperfectly, to judge it and discern it from error precedes Faith and is required for it. However, the spirit of judgment and Understanding or Knowledge and the loving experimental judgment arising from the spirit is not required to introduce Faith. It can only vivify, form, and perfect it. While Faith

[42] *Ibid.* [43] *Ibid.*, a. 1. [44] *Psalm* lxxxi, 5.

belongs to the intellect and precedes Charity, its formation and its life are brought about through Charity. Consequently the Gifts, which serve and prepare for a formed and living Faith, belong only to a man who has Charity. It is very important to keep in mind, then, that the Gifts of Knowledge, Wisdom and Understanding are not just any sort of knowledge or understanding, even in the supernatural order. They are the spirit of knowing and of understanding, etc. The spirit of understanding is more than just a supernatural understanding coming from the spirit. It is born of love, and from a sort of experimental knowledge and contact with the spirit. This Gift serves Faith, not in its unformed stages, but only when it is formed.

21. Although Faith may be ordered to perfect action tending to a supernatural end, some distinction must be made concerning the essential perfection of the act of Faith. It may be conceded that it is the foundation and root of supernatural acts, such as justification, but it is not the proximate and formal principle of such acts. This formal principle is had through Charity which is the bond of perfection, forming and perfecting Faith. In the same way, the Gifts of the Holy Ghost make their contribution, following upon Charity.

22. Sinners living without grace can acutely discern, dispute, and even treat of divine things and of mystical or loving Understanding as an object and matter of disputation. But they cannot use such an Understanding as the principle and motive of their knowledge. For example, I can treat of the intuitive vision of God and of the experimental knowledge of sensible things as the object or matter of a discussion. Yet I do not have the experimental contact with these sensible things nor the intuitive knowledge of God, because I do not use experience and intuition as the principle and formal reason of my knowing. In the same way, the sinner cannot use loving and experimental knowledge as a formal principle. From the very fact that he has not grace, he cannot have a connaturality to the Spirit, nor union with God and experience of Him proper to the Gift. *No one knows except him who has received.*[45] He may use it as an object and treat of it as he remembers it. And in this respect the great change from the state of grace to the condition

[45] *Apocalypse*, ii, 17.

of a sinner is in no way felt. However, it is in the experimental and loving knowledge, the internal touch of the Spirit, that a great change and loss is felt. *For the Holy Spirit of discipline will flee from the deceitful, and will draw himself away from thoughts without understanding, and he shall not abide when iniquity comes in.*[46] The Gifts of the Holy Ghost, then, are taken away from sinners.

On the other hand, those whose hearts are turned to God immediately feel a serenity and tranquillity, and they are relieved of the great burden of sin. This is a sign of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, Who is the *inhabitant of rest.*[47] This peace and serenity is an effect of confession, as the Council of Trent teaches.[48]

The Permanence of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost in Eternity

23. Presupposing that the Gifts are founded upon Charity, upon loving experiential knowledge, and upon connaturality to the Spirit, it is not difficult to realize that they will continue to exist in heaven. Although regulated in a higher way in heaven, the Gifts will be present just as will the Charity in which they are founded, for the Vision of God will govern both Charity and the Gifts. Moreover, if the intellectual and moral virtues remain in heaven[49] the Gifts corresponding to them should perdure, especially since the latter are governed by a more elevated principle — the Holy Ghost. St. Thomas proves this[50] by affirming that the Gifts are given to men to make them docile to the Holy Ghost, not only impelling and activating, but regulating and measuring as well. In heaven, where God is all in all, the soul will be much more happily and perfectly subjected to the Holy Ghost. Therefore, most assuredly the Gifts will remain in heaven.

24. This line of argument proves the permanence of the Gifts in heaven precisely as far as their formal aspect is concerned, the regulation and motion of the Holy Ghost.[51] There remains, however, a difficulty concerning the matter of the Gifts and the conditions of their operation. Both imply some sort of imperfection which cannot be present in heaven.

[46] *Wisdom*, i, 5.
[47] *Isaias*, xxxviii, 11.
[48] *Council of Trent*, session 14, c. 3.
[49] Cf. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, q. 62, d. 17, a. 4.
[50] I-II, q. 68, a. 6.
[51] Cf. Chapter 3, no. 34.

25. First objection: As St. Thomas admits,[52] the matter of some of the Gifts will not be present in heaven. There will be no active life, to which Piety and Fortitude are ordered. Nor will there be Understanding and the penetration of matters of Faith to which the Gifts of Understanding and Knowledge are ordained. No longer will the temptations against which the Gifts are arrayed[53] have to be conquered. Therefore, just as when a virtue ceases to exist when its object is permanently absent—quite as truly as if its essence were destroyed, so too the Gifts will not remain in eternity as they are in this life.

26. Second objection: The intellectual Gifts, at least, cannot be the same in this life and in heaven. Therefore, not all the Gifts remain. For the Gifts of Understanding, Knowledge, and Wisdom proceed with a certain obscurity in this life, since they are regulated by Faith and are compatible with it. However, a habit which has obscurity as an intrinsic element cannot remain in heaven where there will be no obscurity in the intellect, since darkness is an imperfection and defect, which is incompatible with the highest perfection of glory. Therefore, when the obscurity which is intrinsic to the habit is destroyed the whole entity is changed. For example, obscurity cannot be taken out of Faith without destroying its very nature. Therefore, the Gifts involving obscurity in this life, like that of Faith, cannot remain in heaven. Other Gifts, which are not obscure, will take their place.

The third objection: . . . *prophecies will disappear, and tongues will cease, and knowledge will be destroyed.*[54] The knowledge referred to must be the Gift of Knowledge, for the Apostle mentions other supernatural gifts such as prophecy and the gift of tongues.

27. Reply to the first objection: The primary and essential matter of the Gifts is not destroyed in the next life, although secondary and accessory matter or a certain state or condition of the matter may change. The total object of the Gifts is not completely taken away as it is in the case of the cardinal virtues, which remain in spite of this fact.[55] But in heaven the objects of the virtues will not have the same imperfection as they have in this

[52] I-II, q. 68, a.6.
[53] Cf. St. Gregory, *II Moralium*, c. 52, *PL*, lxxv, 592.
[54] *I Corinthians*, xiii, 8.
[55] Cf. John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, q. 62, d. 17, a. 4.

life. There will not be the struggle with passions; there will only be the enjoyment of a great tranquillity. Both states of the virtues, then, have the same object but a diverse manner of acting under varied conditions. St. Thomas does not claim [56] that the Gifts change their whole object but that some of their present matter will not be their concern in heaven. He goes on to explain [57] how some of the matter of the Gifts passes away with this life, while some of it remains. Thus, not the total and adequate object of the Gifts is changed but only that part connected with the imperfection of the present state. The primary and adequate object of each Gift is the particular object to which a man can be moved by the impulse of the Holy Ghost. This object may be present now and in eternity, in battle or in triumph, amidst the labors of this life or in the contemplation and enjoyment of the next. Of course, the active life and its labors will cease. However, action under the impulse of the Holy Ghost will not cease even in heaven. And it is to just this action that the Gifts of the Holy Ghost extend.

28. Reply to the second objection: The fundamental proposition of this objection must be denied. The Gifts seek evidence arising from affective and experimental knowledge and from contact with the divine Spirit. They do not, of course, have that evidence in all matters, for the capacity of the knowing subject is not as great as the knowability of the object.[58] For example, a subalternate science by its very nature always strives for evidence. Yet a person knowing that science can lack the exercise of that evidence by not knowing the higher science which provides the evidence of principles.[59] Consequently, even when Faith is removed, the Gifts remain substantially the same as in this life. However, they will be perfect, purified of the imperfection that they had when the soul walked by Faith; on earth for blinded eyes there can be no intrinsic clarity of the truths believed. The Gifts are, as it were, subalternate to the Beatific Vision, and like Charity in which they are founded, they are subordinated to it. In the absence of the Vision, that subordination is supplied by Faith, and for this reason there is no actual evidence concerning these truths. Yet

[56] I-II, q. 68, a. 6.
[57] *Ibid.*, a. 2.
[58] Cf. Chapter III, no. 37.
[59] John of St. Thomas, *Cursus Theologicus*, Tom. I, disp. 2, and *Cursus Philosophicus*, Tom. I, disp. 25.

even in this life the Gifts have a relationship to evident knowledge. They can have evidence at least of the things which surround Faith, like credibility, for they can know evidently that the things of Faith should be believed. Likewise, although the Gifts without the Beatific Vision cannot penetrate truths of Faith by a positive knowledge, by negative and extrinsic evidence they can know what those truths are not. They can separate the certitude of these truths from opposing errors, and they can discern the things of the Spirit from those of sense and imagination. Not by believing, like Faith, but by understanding, penetrating, and judging with at least extrinsic and negative evidence, the Gifts of the Holy Ghost know scientifically of divine things—at least what they are not. Therefore, the Gifts do not have obscurity as an essential property. In this life, theirs is a clarity negative in its evidence of things to be believed but positive concerning their credibility. For nothing shows more evidently or assures more strongly that the testimony of Faith is good, than the impulse and internal motion *by which the Spirit gives evidence to our spirit that we are the sons of God.*[60] In heaven the soul will have perfect evidence of the things seen. Without being changed essentially by the passage from this life to the next, the Gifts will remain in time of Vision. Only their application and regulative principle will be changed. For then the Beatific Vision will govern the Gifts now ruled by Faith. Likewise, Charity does not change essentially because its object is first believed and then seen. Only its manner of application and the perfection of its regulative principle is changed. Or again, sight, which is a potency of its very nature endowed with evidence and clear knowledge, may see only obscurely because the object is poorly applied, being far away. If the object were brought closer, it would become clear and evident, not through an intrinsic change in the potency but by the extrinsic application of the matter.

29. Reply to the third objection: It is by no means certain that the Apostle is referring to the Gift of the Holy Ghost. He uses the common name of knowledge, not the spirit of knowledge and the knowledge of the saints. These latter terms are customarily used to designate the Gift of Knowledge. Secondly, according to St. Thomas,[61] the Apostle does not affirm that knowl-

[60] *Romans*, viii, 16.

[61] *Commentaria in I Corinthians*, xiii, 8.

edge is completely destroyed. He merely mentions that the state and the imperfect manner of knowledge which in this life involves a dependence upon images will be done away with.

The Superiority or Inferiority of the Gifts

30. The Gifts may be compared both with the virtues and among themselves to determine which is the most perfect. The virtues are either theological, intellectual, or moral. Of the Gifts thus compared, some are in the intellectual part of the soul, others are in the appetitive part.

31. According to St. Thomas,[62] if the Gifts are compared to the theological virtues, the virtues will be found superior. For the theological virtues unite the soul to God as its ultimate end. On the other hand, by the Gifts the soul already united to God is further subjected to Him as moving and regulating it in the attainment of the ultimate end. It is more perfect to be united to God than to be subject to Him as He moves the soul. For union is a closer approach to God than motion and subjection to Him as a Mover.

32. If the Gifts are compared to the intellectual and moral virtues, it is clear that the Gifts are more perfect than the virtues. For where the virtues fail, the Gifts perfect the soul. The very essence of the Gifts evidences this, since the Gifts perfect the soul to obey a higher mover than do these virtues. The intellectual virtues perfect the intellect according to the light of the reason; the moral virtues, natural or supernatural, perfect the will in its obedience to reason. The Gifts, however, perfect the soul in its obedience to the guidance of the Holy Ghost and His immediate rule, according to the manner and measure of His distribution of graces. From this higher regulative principle there follows a more perfect standard and a disposition to follow a higher mover.

33. If the Gifts are evaluated in relation to one another, the intellectual Gifts are found to be more perfect than those in the appetitive part. Wisdom is greater than Understanding; Understanding is greater than Knowledge; and Knowledge greater than Counsel. Among the Gifts of the appetitive part, Piety holds first

[62] I-II, q. 68, a. 8.

place, then comes Fortitude, and, last of all, Fear. This hierarchy refers to the absolute excellence of the Gifts according to their acts in the proper faculties. In a particular order, and in relation to the matter that they regulate, Counsel is preferred to Knowledge, and Fortitude is superior to Piety. All this is the doctrine of St. Thomas.[63]

34. The reason for the first part—that the intellectual Gifts are higher than the others—is found in the fact that the former direct and regulate the latter, and judge concerning them. Prudence directs the moral virtues of the appetitive part and gives them their particular moderation. Consequently, Prudence is the most excellent of the moral virtues. Likewise, therefore, Counsel, which corresponds to Prudence, will be more excellent than Piety, Fortitude, and Fear.

Furthermore, Knowledge proceeds, forms, and judges Prudence. For Knowledge is not purely practical but speculative as well, inquiring and analyzing through causes. The speculative naturally precedes and is more excellent than the practical, because it is more abstract and immaterial. The foundation and reason for the practical, the speculative defends the practical through an analysis of its nature and causes.

Moreover, the Gifts of Understanding and Wisdom precede the Gift of Knowledge. Knowledge is concerned with inferior and created causes. It receives its rule of action from Understanding, apprehending and penetrating divine things through a simple judgment much like the habit of principles. Understanding, therefore, is more perfect than Knowledge, which is concerned with conclusions.

However, Wisdom judges and defends both Knowledge and the principles upon which it reflects. Hence, absolutely speaking, Wisdom exceeds the other Gifts in nobility and perfection, just as the virtue of wisdom is superior to the understanding of principles and knowledge.

35. The reason for the hierarchy of Gifts in the appetitive part is taken from the fact that Piety corresponds to Justice, Fortitude to the virtue of Fortitude, and Fear to Temperance. Since, at least as far as object matter is concerned, Justice is greater than Forti-

[63] *Ibid.*

tude and Fortitude greater than Temperance, the corresponding Gifts should maintain the same order. For the more excellent the virtue, the more excellent the corresponding Gift.

36. The last part of the conclusion, concerning the relative excellence of particular Gifts, is explained on the grounds that in the enumeration of Isaias Counsel is placed before Knowledge and preferred to it. So, too, Fortitude is placed before Piety. Obviously, the matter upon which Fortitude and Counsel act is more difficult and arduous, for which special counsel and strength may be expected from God. These more formidable objects exceed the scope of Piety and Knowledge, which can be exercised in things not especially difficult. For Piety and Knowledge, without essentially involving any notion of arduousness in their object, can be found either with or without it. Absolutely considered, however, Knowledge and Piety are essentially more excellent.

37. An objection concerning the Gift of Fear: St. Thomas[64] puts Fear in the last place because it corresponds to the virtue of Temperance. Yet, according to St. Thomas in another place,[65] this aspect of Fear is secondary; primarily it corresponds to Hope. But, absolutely considered, the perfection and excellence of a Gift, just as of a virtue, should be determined by its primary aspect, not its secondary.

38. Reply: Fear corresponds to both virtues, but as a flight from evil, not a pursuit of good. Through Fear the soul considers sin and flees from it. Looking upon God the soul withdraws into its own nothingness out of reverence for Him Who can inflict punishment. Related to Hope, in this less exalted way, Fear holds the lowest place among the Gifts. For to withdraw from evil is not as noble as to approach to good, although in the order of generation it is first, since departure from one point is previous to the approach to another in the order of generation. *Fear is the beginning of wisdom*,[66] and *by the fear of the Lord men depart from evil*.[67] Fear, then, is the primary and initial Gift in the progress towards perfection. Although it corresponds to the higher virtue of Hope, it does so in a dispositive and preliminary way, as a flight from evil and not in the perfect manner of an approach to good.

[64] I-II, q. 68, a. 4.
[65] II-II, q. 141, a. 1, ad 2.
[66] *Psalm* cx, 10.
[67] *Proverbs*, xvi, 6.

In its full perfection Fear corresponds to Temperance by withdrawing men from superfluous delights and piercing the flesh. Although it still does this by restraining men from evil, the perfect victory in matters of Temperance consists in fleeing harmful delights; according to the Apostle, *Flee fornication.*[68] Hence Fear is higher than Temperance in this matter because it flees and abhors evil more perfectly.

Since he is considering the Gifts in the order of their perfection, St. Thomas[69] treats only of the relationship of the Gift of Fear to Temperance. Yet he recognizes that in relation to justification and the theological virtues, to Hope for example, it is only the beginning, and a disposition to further perfection.[70]

[68] *I Corinthians*, vi, 8.
[69] I-II, q. 68, a. 7.
[70] *Ibid.*, ad 1.

CHAPTER IX *

The Beatitudes and Fruits: The Acts and Effects of the Gifts

1. Made docile to the Holy Ghost by the Gifts, the soul is led to eternal life by conquering difficulties which exceed the power of human reason and the virtues. The more the soul approaches eternal life through acts of the Gifts, the more it casts off the comforts and blandishments of this life. Its separation from the things of the world, from its delight and riches, gives it an approach to true happiness which is eternal life. Moreover, in obviating difficulties and hindrances, these acts free the soul from falsehood. For many err in seeking happiness in sensible things, whose opposition to spiritual goods makes them impediments to progress. Detachment from the goods of this life and the proper disposition to approach true happiness could never be accomplished through the rule of reason and the virtues in their human and limited way. Their essential limitations and weakness prevent their overcoming all the difficulties involved in attaining heaven. Only acts proceeding from the Gifts through the motion and impulse of the Holy Ghost are equal to the task. According to St. Matthew,[1] Our Lord enumerated eight of these special acts called Beatitudes through which the Spirit separates the soul from this world and leads it to eternal happiness: *Thy spirit will lead me into the right land.*[2]

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* OUTLINE OF CHAPTER IX

I. The Beatitudes
   A. The nature of the Beatitudes (1)
   B. The answers to three questions about the Beatitudes
      1) The description of the Beatitudes and their effects
         a) In general (2)
         b) In particular (3, 4 and 5)
      2) The correlation of eight Beatitudes and seven Gifts (6)
      3) The scope of the Beatitudes (7)

II. The Fruits (8)

III. The Relationship Between the Beatitudes and the Fruits (9)

[1] *Matthew*, v, 3-10.
[2] *Psalm* cxlii, 10.

2. The first of three questions which naturally arise at this juncture is: How are these Beatitudes described and what effect do they have in the soul? St. Thomas gives a description and an explanation.[3] There are four Beatitudes which exclude false happiness. There are four more which tend to the attainment of true happiness. Two of these are for the active life, and two are for the contemplative. These eight Beatitudes include everything that can lead to eternal life.

3. The first three Beatitudes and the last one are related to the eliminating of false happiness. The last Beatitude is, as it were, a confirmation and manifestation of the other seven.[4] The first Beatitude, poverty of spirit, removes the inordinate love of riches, so that man will not place his heart or his happiness in them. The second, *blessed are the meek*,[5] removes the inordinate passions of the irascible part of the soul, so that men will not place their end in winning victory and taking vengeance on their enemies. The third, *blessed are those who mourn*,[6] removes the inordinate passions of delight and joy in which many, *whose god is their stomach*,[7] place their last end. The eighth Beatitude, *blessed are those who suffer persecutions*,[8] removes desires of human favor and applause. According to St. Thomas,[9] in virtue of this Beatitude a man would rather suffer persecution than deviate from the way of justice.

4. The fourth and fifth Beatitudes are ordained to the attainment of true beatitude through the works of the active life. The fourth Beatitude is a thirst and hunger after justice—a giving to each his due with a burning heart. The fifth Beatitude, *blessed are the merciful*,[10] gives justice and mercy and alms to friends, neighbors, foreigners and enemies.

5. The sixth and seventh Beatitudes are ordered to the attainment of beatitude through the contemplative life. The sixth Beatitude is the cleansing of the heart through purity. Without it contemplation is impossible. *Blessed are the pure of heart*.[11] The peace which surpasses all sense and inebriates the spirit is a work of justice—*Blessed are the peacemakers*.[12]

[3] I-II, q. 68, a. 2.
[4] Cf. *ibid.*, ad 2.
[5] *Matthew*, v, 4.
[6] *Ibid.*, v, 5.
[7] *Phillipians*, iii, 19.
[8] *Matthew*, v, 10.
[9] I-II, q. 68, a. 3, ad 6.
[10] *Matthew*, v, 7.
[11] *Ibid.*, v, 8.
[12] *Ibid.*, v, 9.

6. The second question which comes to mind is: How can seven Gifts be related to eight Beatitudes, and how is it that St. Luke mentions only four Beatitudes while St. Matthew mentions eight? First of all, according to St. Thomas,[13] the eighth Beatitude is a sort of confirmation and clarification of the others. It implies a firmness of soul in the face of human persecution, preventing it from failing to fulfill the other seven Beatitudes and Gifts. It makes a man spurn human favor and prefer to withstand persecution. Consequently, the seven Beatitudes are related to the seven Gifts, the eighth Beatitude implies a firmness in matters belonging to all the Gifts.

The Beatitudes enumerated by St. Luke were given by the Lord in another sermon to the multitudes after He came down from the mountain, as St. Luke expressly states.[14] Because Our Lord was speaking to the multitude, He mentioned only those Beatitudes which are intended to remove false happiness, for many of the crowd were inclined to seek their happiness in this world. Therefore, He mentioned poverty, hunger or labor, weeping in opposition to delight, hate or persecution of men, which is contrary to human favor and applause. In His sermon to His disciples, who were more perfect, He added the other four Beatitudes which belong to the attainment of true beatitude. From this it may be concluded that it is not necessary that all the Gifts be exercised by all at all times, although all are necessary for salvation should the time and occasion arise. Similarly, all the positive precepts, like the virtues, need be practiced only in their proper place and time.

7. The third question is: Do the Gifts contain only works of supererogation and counsel or also those of precept? They embrace all things ordered to eternal happiness through a special impulse of the Holy Ghost. There are many works which are objectively great and extraordinary, for example, the complete detachment from riches through poverty of spirit, the calming of all passion, and the suffering of all the persecutions of this life. There are other works which, although they are not great in themselves, assume magnitude because of attendant circumstances and weakness of the person. These latter require a special Gift and motion of the Holy Ghost to overcome obstacles. For example, to use riches moderately even without giving them up completely, belongs to poverty of

[13] I-II, q. 68, a. 8, ad 5. [14] Cf. *Luke*, vi, 17 ff.

spirit. Not being overcome by persecutions and withstanding ordinary temptations for any length of time frequently require a Beatitude.

8. St. Thomas[15] treats the fruits of the Holy Ghost quite thoroughly. The fruits are not distinguished from the works of the Gifts and the virtues. They merely connote a certain delight and taste in their execution.[16] Hence there is nothing to prevent one thing being a virtue, a beatitude, and a fruit.

The fruit produced last by the tree is received with the fullest enjoyment. The last things produced by the tree watered by the Holy Ghost are acts and effects commanded by the Gifts and virtues. When these are received with a delight of the spirit, they are called fruits of the Holy Ghost. This is especially evident in the twelve enumerated by St. Paul[17] and explained by St. Thomas.[18] A Beatitude is itself a fruit, for it is the act of a Gift. However, according to St. Thomas,[19] it adds a certain excellence among the works which lead to eternal life.

9. The relation of each Beatitude and each of the twelve fruits to its respective Gift is treated by St. Thomas in various places where he considers each particular Gift.[20] There is no special difficulty involved in these matters.

> To the honor of Our Crucified Lord, Jesus Christ, to the Most Blessed Virgin, St. Dominic and St. Thomas, April 21, 1674 at Saragossa during the expedition in Catalonia.

Thus far the author has left copies corrected with his own hand.

THE END

[15] I-II, q. 70.
[16] Cf. II-II, q. 157, a. 2, ad 3.
[17] *Galatians*, v, 22.
[18] I-II, q. 70, a. 3.
[19] *Ibid.*, a. 2.
[20] II-II, q. 8, a. 7 and 8; q. 9, a. 4; q. 19, a. 12; q. 45, a. 6; q. 52, a. 5; q. 121, a. 2 and q. 129, a. 2.

BOOK REVIEWS

Presence et Union: Les Missions des Personnes de la Sainté-Trinite selon S. Thomas d'Aquin. By Dom Lucien Chambat, O.S.B. Abbaye S. Wandrille: Editions de Fontenelle, 1943. Pp. 205.

As the title manifests, the intention of the author is to expose the teaching of St. Thomas on the missions of the Divine Persons of the Trinity and their indwelling in the soul. To accomplish this end Dom Lucien first seeks the sources of St. Thomas' doctrine in Sacred Scripture, St. Augustine, St. Albert. The main portion of the book is taken up with a minute analysis of the following capital texts from St. Thomas' major works: *I Sent.*, d. 14-18; *I Sent.*, d. 37; *IV Contra Gentiles*, c. 21; *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 43.

The author's conclusions are conveniently summarized in the preface; they touch only the invisible missions, with which the work is mainly concerned:

1) The mission of the divine Persons terminates at an indwelling of these Persons in the soul of the just.

2) This indwelling is simply the presence of the divine Persons as exemplary and efficient cause of sanctifying grace.

3) This presence manifests in some way the divine Persons, who thus become an object of knowledge and love: this manifestation or knowledge does not constitute the presence; the Persons are present before any knowledge or love, present or represented in sanctifying grace and are by this fact apt to be known and loved.

In the preface Dom Lucien also manifests his secondary purpose—a criticism and rejection of the explanations given by Père Gardeil, O. P. in his work *La Structure de l'Ame et l'éxperience mystique*. This great theologian, rejecting the opinion of Vasquez, which many Thomists were following, revived the teaching of John of St. Thomas on the subject of God's Presence in the soul and the missions of the divine Persons. Before giving the explanation of Père Gardeil, it may help the discussion to quote the text of St. Thomas which is the source of difficulty.

I answer that, A divine person is fittingly sent in the sense that He exists newly in anyone, and He is fittingly given as possessed by anyone; but neither of these is otherwise than by sanctifying grace.

For God is in all things in a universal way by His essence, power, and presence, as the cause existing in the effects which participate in His goodness. Above and beyond this universal way, however, there is one special way belonging to the

rational nature wherein God is said to be present as the object known is in the knower, and the beloved in the lover. And since the rational creature by its operation of knowledge and love attains to God Himself, according to this special way God is said not only to exist in the rational creature, but also to dwell therein as in His own temple. So no other effect can be put down as the reason why the divine person is in the rational creature in a new way, except sanctifying grace. . . . *Summa Theologica*, I, q. 43, a. 3.

According to Père Gardeil, in this text, St. Thomas, conformably to his doctrine elsewhere, is distinguishing the two principal modes of God's presence to creatures (the special mode of the Incarnation is not considered). These two modes are based on the two types of relation that can exist between God and His creatures. One relation is universal — that of cause to effects; this relation pervades all of created reality, natural and supernatural; it is the presence of immensity. St. Thomas also speaks of a *new mode* of God's presence; this is an objective presence, the presence of an *object known and loved*. This presence is distinct, though not separable, from the presence of immensity, for it is based on a new relation of the rational creature to God. It is true that an object can be known and loved without being physically and intimately present to the knower and lover; it is, nevertheless present in a new way, objectively. The perfection of this way demands an intimate, physical union of the beloved and the lover, which is not caused by love itself. Two people may know and love each other deeply, without being physically present to each other. Physical presence depends upon something else. Now any one acquainted with St. Thomas' doctrine on grace, faith and charity, knows that these gifts make God present objectively in the soul, but they do not bring about His real presence; this is presupposed, because of His causality. That God can be intimately attained by the operation of knowing and loving is due to the fact that God is physically present in the soul by way of causality.

Dom Lucien rejects this interpretation of Père Gardeil for several reasons. One, an extrinsic reason, seems to have great weight with him since he refers to it several times; it is Père Gardeil's lack of erudition—his work is lacking "in that positive investigation and objective examination of texts, which is the indispensable foundation for the discernment of Thomistic thought" (p. 136). We should not be surprised at the attitude of the author toward Père Gardeil; we shall see later that he manifests the same attitude toward St. Thomas. Another reason comes from the fact that this theory has recourse ultimately to an experimental and joyous possession of God. The fact that St. Thomas himself refers to an experimental knowledge is considered of slight importance. Dom Lucien also is astonished that St. Thomas might use the word "presence" in an analogical sense. He insists that if St. Thomas says there are two modes of God's presence,

both have to be real presences, based on the presence of the cause to the effect. On the contrary, the whole doctrine of St. Thomas gives evidence that he considers the object of knowledge and love as present in a special way, intentionally, to the one who knows and loves. It is true that this intentional presence abstracts from the physical presence; but when the physical presence is wanting one cannot be said to dwell with the object known and loved, or to possess and enjoy it. St. Thomas is attempting to explain the scriptural data; this he does by linking the physical presence of immensity with the intentional presence of knowledge and love. Dom Lucien seems to be unacquainted with St. Thomas' teachings on Faith and Charity, which are specified by God Himself as their immediate objects. Fr. Gardeil, acquainted with the whole theology of St. Thomas, sees immediately the significance of the phrase — *sicut cognitum in cognoscente et amatum in amante*.

Dom Lucien prefers to see the two modes of God's preesnce explained in terms of causality. The first mode is efficient causality *simpliciter*; this is not universal, but confined to the gifts of nature. Now it is true that both St. Albert and St. Thomas frequently refer this mode to the natural gifts; however, there is sufficient evidence that they do not confine it to the natural gifts. Thus, for instance, St. Albert says explicitly: "While in us there is a distinction between the gifts of grace and nature, there is none in God who gives them: for He gives all in one gratuitous gift which is the Holy Ghost, as He makes all in one word, which is the Son" (*I Sent.*, d. 18, a. 2, ad 3). The teaching of St. Thomas on the temporal processions of the divine persons is also significant: all gifts are attributed to the first Gift, which is the Holy Spirit; the gifts of the Holy Ghost are so called because they most perfectly manifest the gratuitousness of God's love for us. It is significant that Dom Lucien has difficulty with St. Thomas' answer to the question: Can the Holy Ghost be said to send Himself? St. Thomas answers with a distinction; Dom Lucien says he is only trying to explain the traditional phrase. St. Thomas, however, says that insofar as the effects according to which the missions of the persons take place are caused by the whole Trinity, the Holy Ghost can be said to send Himself. Now these effects are of the supernatural order, not merely of the natural order. There is no reason then to deny that the divine presence, which is based on the relation of cause to effect, is universal, and extends to every effect of the natural and supernatural order.

Dom Lucien admits the Catholic doctrine that all the effects of God *ad extra* are to be attributed to the whole Trinity. However, he tries to introduce a distinction which, if valid, would destroy this truth. Thus, for example, he says: "A new causality, specified by its term which is sanctifying grace, enters into play here, and, by reason of this causality, a new order of things begins to unroll" (pp. 184-5). What is this new causality?

It is, the author explains, not in the order of efficient causality, but in that of exemplary causality. " . . . it suffices to make precise, as does St. Thomas, in what sense the action of the persons is common to the three persons, and in what sense it can be called special to each. Looked at as efficient causality, this action is one and identical, as the essence itself with which it is identified; but one can consider it also as exemplary causality . . . ; under this aspect and by reason of this aspect, it can belong by a special title to one or another person" (p. 179). On the basis of this principle, then, Dom Lucien speaks of "*l'activité particulière*" of the Holy Ghost in charity (p. 136). He also says: "For St. Thomas, as for St. Albert, the first procession is productive of the natural gifts, the second of the gifts of grace, and each terminates at a particular mode of presence, implied in the exercise of one or another causality" (p. 181). Dom Lucien's fundamental error in this matter should be clear: he looks upon exemplary causality as an action, a sort of efficient causality. Action is according to the exemplary cause; but the action flows from the efficient cause. And in God all action *ad extra* must be attributed to the whole Trinity.

The most fundamental objection against Dom Lucien's explanation of St. Thomas' doctrine, is that it deprives the doctrine of its most perfect fruit. Time and time again, St. Thomas points out that the temporal processions of the divine persons terminate at the gifts produced in the creature, whereas the missions terminate not at the gifts but with the Persons themselves. It is the Person who dwells in the soul, manifests Himself, is possessed and enjoyed. True, none of this can take place without the gifts of grace, i. e., sanctifying grace, wisdom and charity. A spiritual being can be possessed only through knowledge and love; wisdom and charity give us the power to possess the divine Persons. On the contrary, Dom Lucien continually minimizes this doctrine and states explicitly that the Persons are present in their gifts and are possessed in their gifts. "In the first mode, these Persons were present by way of cause alone, i. e., letting appear only their common causality; in the second mode, they are present by way of *objects*, of objects situated *in the one operating himself*" (p. 163). "If one considers them (the Persons) as the principle of the return of the rational creature to its end (*inquantum ratio redeundi in finem*), one will have the temporal procession according to grace, which terminates at the production of the gifts that unite immediately to the ultimate end, namely, sanctifying grace and glory" (p. 181). The Persons can be said to be present in a new way, because of the exercise of their exemplary causality.

As we mentioned previously, the author frequently goes out of his way to criticize St. Thomas. Thus, for instance, he says, in regard to a certain passage in *IV Contra Gentiles*, c. 21, which states the principle: Every

object loved is found in the one loving: "St. Thomas would have rendered us an appreciable service if he had taken the trouble to give us the precise meaning he attached to this embarrasing principle. He did not judge it good to do so. But perhaps this omission can be explained by the fact that the holy Doctor in c. 19 had made extended remarks on this point and gave many applications and developments, which the attentive reader has not forgotten . . ." (p. 141). Such statements as these seem to be habitual with writers on St. Thomas who pride themselves on over-minute textual study of the Angelic Doctor.

Dom Lucien set out to establish a thesis. It has seemed to this writer that he failed, not because of his careful study of the texts involved, but because of his failure to interpret them in terms of St. Thomas' whole doctrine. His work has brought out the emphasis that St. Thomas places on exemplary causality and the assimilation of the rational creature to God. However, St. Thomas is too explicit, both in regard to the unity of the divine action in the order of efficient causality, and in regard to the special mode of presence through knowledge and love, to admit the interpretation of Dom Lucien as valid. St. Thomas is always his own best interpreter; and it was St. Thomas that Père Gardeil used in giving his interpretation of the doctrine on the missions of the Persons of the Trinity.

JAMES M. EGAN, O.P.

Dominican House of Studies,
Washington, D.C.

Cursus Philosophiae. By HENRI GRENIER, Ph.D., S.T.D., J.C.D. Quebec: Le Seminaire de Quebec, Editio altera, 1944. Vol. I, Introductio generalis, Logica, Philosophia Naturalis, pp. 490; Vol. II, Metaphysica, pp. 332; Vol. III, Philosophia Moralis, pp. 431.

The fact that this course of philosophy comes to us from the University of Laval in Quebec as well as its typography and format reminds one immediately of Lortie's *Elementa*. The same font is used, and the same general arrangement of matter into books, chapters and articles with an outline at the head of each chapter is followed. The general appearance is that of an attractive, easily read book.

But here the resemblance to Lortie ends. Abbé Grenier, while he follows the major divisions of philosophy now canonized by usage, includes and arranges matter according to a plan which, however fresh and novel it may appear, has the sanction of Aristotle and St. Thomas. The general tenor of the whole course is struck in the first volume where more than half of the brief introduction to philosophy is devoted to St. Thomas Aquinas, his relation to Aristotle, his works, how they are cited, and the approval of his

works by the Church. Hence the mind and teaching of St. Thomas and Aristotle are faithfully adhered to, and, whenever possible, any of the Twenty-Four Theses pertinent to the discussion is quoted. The whole course then has a strongly theological slant, and attempts to present not merely a philosophical background to seminarians, but an ambitious and Catholic outlook on life to college students in general. Thus for example, we find on the question of the origin of the world, "*Statuitur thesis. Thesis est ex fide* (sic) *ex Conc. Vaticani, Can. V, Cap. I, Sess. III*" (vol. II, p. 304), and a discussion of the knowability of miracles closing the volume on metaphysics.

The third volume is the most noteworthy due to its uncommon adherence to the terminology of Aristotle and St. Thomas. For Abbé Grenier, moral philosophy is neither a speculative nor a hyphenated science, but essentially and formally practical both from the matter and from the viewpoint. It is subordinate but not subalternated to any speculative science, since it has its own self-evident principles. While he appears to differ from the stand taken by Fr. Ramirez, O. P., on the relation of moral philosophy to theology, actually he concludes that moral philosophy is not a sufficient guide for human acts, because of the fact of man's elevation to a supernatural end, the attainment of which requires the principles of faith and supernatural means. He divides moral philosophy into three essentially distinct sciences according as the ends of human activity differ: Monastics, or Ethics, on the individual; Economics, on domestic society; and Politics, on civil society. Very properly, at least on Thomistic grounds, he gives the primacy to Politics among the practical sciences. Under each of these, a wealth of matter is treated.

Monastics embraces the end of human acts, natural happiness and a treatment of perfect happiness, which is formally the intellectual vision of God; human acts considered psychologically and morally, and the principles of human acts which are laws and virtues, under which prudence, justice and right, fortitude, temperance, and friendship are considered with all their parts and opposed vices. Economics treats of society and authority in general, and then of domestic society, under which marriage and its properties, parental authority and duties are discussed, and ends with an appendix on slavery and the status of domestic servants and familiars. Politics starts with the quotation of St. Thomas' prologue to his commentary on the *Politics* of Aristotle; it is divided into two books, the causes of civil society and the restoration of civil society (a phrase borrowed from the Encyclicals), and concludes with the relations of societies among themselves, and with the Church. The Papal pronouncements of recent years are frequently cited, and the teachings of the authors of the modern social errors are pithily but sufficiently quoted in footnotes, Marx, Engels, Rousseau, Lenin, Stalin, etc. As one might expect from the place of publication, nearly all such citations are in French.

The footnotes are another indication of the apologetical trend of the work, which amounts to almost a Catholic bias. Abbé Grenier saves his energy to dispute with those outside the School; domestic controversies are handled delicately and quietly. Thus no great effort is made to expose the background, presuppositions and arguments of Scotus or Suarez, nor are their works either cited or quoted. This is not to say that they are ignored; but their dissenting opinion is simply stated. St. Thomas, too, is sometimes simplified. Thus, for example, in the thorny problem of premotion, Abbé Grenier sedulously avoids using the word *praemotio*, and refuses even to attempt reconciling premotion and human liberty.

> To solve the problem we should perfectly know the divine operation itself, while we know it only imperfectly through analogy with created operation. Hence here lies a mystery which we cannot solve.
>
> Hence we lay aside the controversies which have arisen on this problem, and we show, as far as natural reason can, only that the divine motion does not destroy created liberty. II, p. 313.

And then he gives the doctrine of I-II, q. 10, a. 4.

The overall picture is, however, a fairly complete course of philosophy along rigorous Aristotelian and Thomistic lines. It is a textbook, pure and simple, and thus leaves a good deal to the instructor. About the only pedagogical device used besides the traditional scholastic form of prenotes and thesis is the listing of a few questions at the foot of each article to point up and emphasize the more important points. Since his theological preoccupations are so evident, it might be suggested that the author go a little further and cite the places where the doctrines of St. Thomas' adversaries, past and present, are to be found, and that he show the applicability and influence of the various conclusions established in philosophy on theology. Even the briefest indications of this sort would add to the value of the book and arouse the interest of students. A richer bibliography is also to be desired.

An edition in English of these volumes is being prepared. When it appears, unless too badly marred by the errors that beset books in English published abroad and by the involved Latinisms that obscure vernacular philosophy, it is to be recommended to those schools in this country that sincerely desire to comply with ecclesiastical legislation on following St. Thomas—a desire too frequently hampered by the lack of English manuals other than those whose Thomism is merely nominal or completely and deliberately absent. A work of philosophy or theology that bears the magic name, St. Thomas, on its title page or in footnotes does not thereby become Thomistic; but this book is definitely Thomistic, for it breathes the spirit of St. Thomas on nearly every page.

IGNATIUS MCGUINESS, O.P.

Dominican House of Studies,
Washington, D.C.

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